

Children of the Wolf And Raven: A History of the Early Germanic People

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Chapter 1: The Creation of the Realms And The Saga of Ask and Embla

How and why the universe came to be is unknown. Long before the Gods, long before the Angels and the elemental spirits the universe existed.

In its center stands Yggdrasil, the World Tree, the oldest living thing in existence, the source of Magic that flows throughout the Realms, holding them together and giving life its energy. Where Yggdrasil came from, like the universe itself, is a mystery. Perhaps it has always been, the one constant in an ever evolving cosmos.

To the south of Yggdrasil, through eons of change and Magics weaving and bursting, the land of Muspelheim came to be, a land of fire, and from the lava came the Fire Giants, led by Surtr, who existed before the Gods and who, because of this, deem themselves superior to them.

To the east a frozen land of snow and ice formed, it had no name. In this land of ice a giant was created by Magical means, given life and a soul. When the giant awoke he searched for food, his mouth watering.

He wandered this new land until he came upon a female cow licking icicles on a mountainside. The giant, who had by now given himself the name Ymir, approached the animal cautiously, showing her he was no threat.

Getting close to her Ymir bent down and tried drawing milk from her udders, which worked, and so he drank his fill.

The two formed a bond with Ymir protecting the cow, whom he came to call Audhumbla, from Fire Giants who, once they learned of this new land, attempted to conquer it. In exchange the giant, first of the race known as Frost Giants, feasted on her milk, a source of strength and Magic.

It is not known how long Ymir and Audhumbla walked the frozen wastes together, but it is presumed to have been eons. The Fire Giants in time stopped their attacks and Surtr, seeing an opportunity, offered Ymir a truce.

He accepted and as part of this peace married Surtr's daughter, Runa, with whom he had several children, including Balthorn.

During this time of peace Audhumbla, while licking salt off a rock close to a cliffside, found a man buried beneath the ice. Ymir pulled him out and shook him until he became conscious.

Ymir asked him his name, and the man said Buri.

He was the first of the Aesir.

At the time of Buri's birth other Gods throughout the universe were coming into being, such as Uranus and Gaia, Ptah, Nammu, Tiamat and Apsu, and so many others were born during this time. Why this happened and what caused it none can say. Perhaps the Magic of Yggdrasil reached such potency it gave rise to these beings, or maybe some unknown deity who has remained elusive created them for their own ends, but whatever the case the first Gods came into being alongside Buri.

The first Aesir, like Ymir, took a Fire Giant as a wife and had a son named Borr, who in turn married a daughter of Balthorn named Bestla.

Borr and Bestla became the parents of three sons. The eldest was Odin, the second Vili, and the third Ve. The trio grew up close in the frozen lands, Odin leading the group, dreaming of a better life.

The Aesir, their connection to the universe' Magic stronger, soon began to rival the Fire and Frost Giants in power, Surtr becoming concerned. He called his son in law to Muspelheim and together he and Ymir discussed the rising power of the Gods.

Both agreed it was troublesome, however Ymir, being father in law and grandfather to the Aesir respectively, was reluctant to do harm to them. But Surtr, desiring their destruction to protect his homeland (and, he secretly hoped, to steal their power) pushed the idea of extermination. He masked it by saying they were planning to kill the Giants and called in Runa to verify what he said.

However 'Runa' was not, in fact, his daughter, but a Magical construct designed for this specific purpose. 'She' told her husband what their grandchildren planned, detailing their murderous intent, and by the end of this talk Ymir, mortified by what he'd heard, consented to wiping out Buri's bloodline.

Returning from Muspelheim with a host of Fire Giants behind him Ymir advanced on the Aesir's territory. Buri, Borr, Odin and his brothers watched them come, preparing for battle.

What followed was one of the very first major battles in the universe, equaled only by the battles fought between the

offspring of Tiamat and Apsu and the struggle between Uranus and his son Kronos.

Odin, though still young, led his family into the fray, striking down the Fire Giants nearest him before, having forged an axe from the ice, swinging around and cutting down more enemies with his weapon. After thirty seconds of fighting Ymir was alone and surrounded by his kinsmen.

Buri wanted to talk it out, to hear Ymir's reasons, but Odin rejected his grandfather's appeals for temporary mercy. He attacked his maternal grandfather, leaping into the air and bringing down his axe on the Frost Giant's skull, killing him.

The death of Ymir and his men ended Surtr's plans to invade the frozen lands, but it did not stop the hostilities of the Frost Giants who continued to war with them for sometime until Odin, growing tired of constant battle managed to make peace.

He offered a compromise to the Frost Giants. If they recognized the Aesir's overlordship they, the Aesir, would create for them an entire world of their own to be called Jotunheim where they could live autonomously. The Frost Giants accepted this proposal.

Ymir's body, frozen over by now, was what Odin and his brothers used to create Jotunheim, but they didn't just create Jotunheim, they created other realms too:

Niffheim, a land of ice and snow where Odin placed Audhumbla and other snow spirits who wished to go there.

Vanaheim, a world of plentiful forests and rolling hills where Gods called the Vanir, a family of deities came to reside, having made a deal with the Aesir. The most important were Njord, his wife Nerthus, and his two twin children Freyr and Freya, the God and Goddess of Fertility, good weather, and good harvests, sexuality and beauty respectively.

Asgard, this would be the home of the Aesir, a city more than a world, it possessed everything Midgard possess save the population. Here Odin would rule from his home of Valhalla, Hall of the Slain, where the greatest of warriors go upon death to feast and drink for all eternity in the presence of the Gods.

Alfheim, the home of the Light Elves, beings Odin and his brothers created from Star Light. Even though Alfheim is their native land, many Light Elves found their way to Midgard and settled in large numbers throughout the world.

Svartalfheim, the home of the Dark Elves. The Dark Elves, similarly to their Light Elven kinsmen, were created from Star Light, but to distinguish them from the Light Elves the brothers gave them ash coloured skin, hence the name. Both kinds of Elves have an affinity for Magic given they were born from Star Light, itself made up mainly of Magic. The Dark Elves, too, made homes on Midgard in great numbers, building communities throughout the planet.

Jotunheim, the land of the Frost Giants. Like their ancestral home Jotunheim was icy and snow filled, but unlike it the Frost Giants created cities and villages, bringing civilization to it. Like their Elven counterpart, some Frost Giants did migrate

to Midgard, but in small numbers (for reasons we will explain in short order).

Lastly the brothers, with the help of the other Gods and servants they created from pure Magical energy called Angels, made Midgard, home for the future race they had in mind to create. But in the meantime they created the Dwarves, the Goblins, Fairies, Centaurs, Satyrs, Trolls, Nymphs, Gnomes, and many other Magical creatures to fill the lands.

Knowing how the Frost and Fire Giants felt about them and their creation, the Aesir, with the aid of the other Gods, created Magical barriers around the realms they made to prevent any hostile force from overwhelming them, incasing them in what could be described as shells, but despite this some craft Giants or spirits do, from time to time, manage to slip through.

When each planet was done Odin and his brothers took them to Yggdrasil, placing them on the branches of the World Tree where they were connected to the powerful Magic flowing through it.

With this done the other Gods created their own homes. The Olympians created Olympus and placed it on Yggdrasil. The Annunaki, the Gods who would be worshiped by the Sumerians , Akkadians, and Babylonians, created the realm we call Heaven today which is one of the larger worlds, hosting numerous Gods and Goddesses, including Yehovah, the God associated with Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, who would later go on to become King of the realm.

The Egyptian Gods, led by Osiris, formed Aaru, known to the Egyptians as the Field of Reeds, where they dwell. Brahma, the Head God of the Hindu Pantheon, created his realm of Brahmaloaka and so it went on so that all the Gods had places to call home, each connected to Midgard so that they could pass freely back and forth.

Humans, while not the first created beings on Midgard, were not far behind the other creations, coming into being on the second day of the planet's life. Throughout the world the Gods went to work creating them, forming them from the earth, creating them in their image and granting them immortal souls.

These first humans lived in a Golden Age free of strife, hardship, and lived long lives even surpassing us today. They walked and talked with the Gods as friends do and got along with the Elves and other Magical creatures they shared the lands with, intermarrying with them, infusing human bloodlines with Elven, Dwarven, Nymph, and Angelic blood.

Of course such a time couldn't last and humans as well as other races faced a decline in mortality and goodness, leaving the Golden Age in the past. They warred among themselves, created Kingdoms and tribes, and the Gods, believing in freedom of will above all things, didn't intervene much.

Midgard existed for billions of years in this cycle, with cataclysms from wars between Gods and the Dark Forces

which, like them, had been created in the beginning or developed later on, natural disasters, and Magic wiping out countless civilizations and peoples throughout time. Each time the Gods came back down to earth and created new humans and other beings, repopulating the world.

It was during the days after one of our most recent worldwide cataclysm, what Christians, Jews, and Muslims call Noah's flood, in 3050 BC when Odin and his brothers decided to create new humans. These humans would become the first Germanic peoples.

For these humans they wanted to make them tough and hardened to survive in a post cataclysmic world, so they chose a tough landscape to create them in, what is today Greenland.

Here Odin, Vili, and Ve came down on Greenland's coasts and searched for the perfect materials to create these people from, eventually coming upon two trees, solitary beings in an open grassy plain.

An Ash and an Elm tree, both imbued with Magical properties, a necessity for creating life. Wanting to see if humans created from trees instead of clay would endure Odin convinced his brothers to use the materials to craft their creations.

Vili took the trees, breaking them down and morphed the pieces into bones and flesh, crafting two human bodies. Male and female, without blemish. He gave the male light brown hair, brown eyes, and the female light blonde hair and blue eyes, lying them down on the grass once he was finished.

Next Ve designed their organs, using his Magic to place them inside their bodies in the correct places, finishing off with blood, giving their skin a healthy colour.

Lastly Odin, the Allfather, gave them souls, breathing each into the bodies, bringing them to life. When the man and woman rose, they stared up at the Gods bewildered, as one can imagine.

Odin named them Ask and Embla after the trees they came from. He gave them simple instructions, to live and flourish in their land, that one day he would return and bring others like themselves to them to lead if they proved worthy.

With that the Allfather, placing a hand on each of them, blessed them with the wisdom and knowledge they would need to survive, and bid them farewell, he and his brothers departing.

Watching them go Ask and Embla stood in the open grass, unsure what to do next. There was an entire world unknown to them, with only Odin's knowledge giving them any guiding light.

On Embla's suggestion they started by creating weapons in order to defend themselves and to hunt. From flint they made hand knives and from a few sparse trees they were able to find they managed to craft two spears. With these tools the two went on to hunt for game.

Their first hunt consisted of going after a herd of reindeer which both wanted for meat and, additionally, to make clothing from, Odin leaving them naked!

They tracked a herd close to the Greenlandic coast and Ask, crawling on his belly, snuck up close to one of the older males. He whispered a prayer for both a good hunt and for the animal's soul before he threw his spear.

It struck home, killing the animal cleanly. Ask, running and snatching up the spear from the kill, threw it again, killing another before the herd could run off.

Ask left Embla to skin the deer as he followed the herd, needing to kill several more if they were to create clothing for themselves. He spent the next day on their trail, but failed to catch them again.

He returned to Embla, hunger nearly taken hold of him, and the two found a nearby cave to rest in, huddling over a fire to keep warm while they ate the reindeer meat.

They slept in this cave for two days, Ask venturing out each morning to track game, returning with two arctic hares every day, but tracking reindeer proved futile, putting them into a difficult position.

Another day past, the pair struggling to keep warm in the climate they found themselves in. That night a figure appeared outside the cave, a cloak trailing down his back.

At first they believed it was Odin, but quickly discarded this idea when they remembered the Allfather would return with other people.

Ask grabbed his spear, started to rise.

The figure held up a hand.

"I mean no harm, but if you persist, I'll be forced to kill you."

The figure came into the cave, the flames from the fire illuminating his face. He was a handsome, if pale, man, with white hair but youthful face, his greenish blue eyes appeared watery.

"I am Loki,"

He announced, smiling down at the man and woman,

"A traveler."

The knowledge Odin passed on to Ask and Embla did not include the names of every Aesir or divine being who dwelt in Asgard, so they had no idea who Loki was at this point.

Looking to ease the tension, Embla handed Loki a piece of leftover hare meat which he ate with relish. He asked the couple if he could stay with them awhile. When neither spoke he promised that, in exchange for temporary shelter, he would gift them both clothing, seeing as they, he smirked, were somewhat lacking in this area.

Reluctantly the pair agreed and Loki, using his Magic, crafted clothing before their very eyes, giving them both fur coats and

leggings, fit enough, he claimed, to last years and keep them warm in any weather.

Putting them on the pair thanked him and immediately felt warmer, the half God's words ringing true. An hour they slept.

The following morning Loki insisted on accompanying Ask out on the hunt, suggesting they go after another herd of reindeer. Ask, not much of a fan of this idea, consented anyway and the two set off.

Now Loki is a lover of mischief, of tricks and pranks, and he didn't fail to pull some small tricks on his human companion this day.

Once, as Ask went to drink some water from a small stream they happened upon, Loki used his Magic to 'trip' up his feet and Ask fell face first into the water.

Another time, as he studied droppings left behind by a herd, Loki called up a strong wind, using it to make some of the pieces of dung strike Ask in the face.

Finally, while going after the reindeer, Loki pantsed Ask, causing the man to tumble over, his genitals and legs flailing in the cold air. But, in recompense, he took down four deer for the couple and helped his new found friend take the meat back to the cave.

Loki spent two weeks with the pair, helping them build a house made out of stone he carved out with his Magic, allowing them to have a more permanent place of residence while they hunted for food.

Then, one day while he and Ask sat outside of the home talking of Loki's travels, a Raven flew over head, perching on the top of the stone dwelling.

"Muninn."

Loki laughed, shaking his head,

"Has your master called me home?"

The Raven blinked at him, ruffling his feathers.

When Ask questioned him about the bird Lok grinned.

"This,"

He said pointing at the Raven,

"Is Muninn. One of Odin's two Ravens. He's come to let me know I've overstayed my welcome."

The Trickster got up and offered Ask his hand, wishing him and Embla good luck before departing, Muninn flying off close behind him.

And, as it turned out, the couple would need luck. Two months after Loki's departure winter set in on the island, blanketing the ground with snow and nearly trapping Ask and Embla inside their home.

Hunting became almost impossible, leaving them struggling for food, and to make things even worse, Embla was pregnant.

Ask did what he could, tracking down smaller game like hares and arctic foxes, but one day he almost met his demise while hunting.

Distracted by hunger and not paying attention to his surroundings, he stumbled across the hunting grounds of a polar bear.

He barely had time to register his mistake before the animal was rushing at him, her roars the first thing he heard, the white of her fur the second.

The bear bulldozed Ask over, sending him skidding over icy patches, knocking his spear away, leaving him defenseless. He scrambled to get to his feet, the bear's roars enough to cause panic in most people, but Ask forced himself to remain calm despite his heart sitting in his throat, his adrenaline high.

He rolled away from another attack and went for his spear, but the polar bear easily overpowered him, using her claw to bat the spear away and send him flying again, this time with blood oozing from his chest and arms, wounds received from the claw.

Injured and running out of options Ask turned to face her, this time summoning his courage for what he believed was his last few minutes alive.

The bear went up on her hindlegs in an attempt to intimidate him, but Ask grabbed his spear, showing no signs of visible fear.

The two faced off for a moment, then suddenly from the corner of his eye Ask spotted an all black Wolf. He turned to it, the Wolf's deep blue eyes stunningly beautiful, leaving him speechless.

The polar bear went back to her natural position and stared at the Wolf, seemingly unsettled by their sudden appearance.

Without prompting the bear retreated, leaving Ask as suddenly as she attacked him. The hunter looked on in puzzlement.

The question of why the bear ran away was soon resolved when the Wolf was joined by a woman clad in a silver gown. Ask, shocked at this woman's presence and seemingly nonchalant attitude, tried asking her who she was, but couldn't find the words.

Her name, she revealed, was Tamfana, Goddess of Animals and the Wilderness. He was lucky, she said, that she just happened to pass by when she did. Otherwise the bear would have made a meal of him.

The Wolf disappeared then, again leaving Ask speechless.

He, the Wolf, was named Hanskar, Tamfana said, and he was a spirit being, as old as the Gods themselves, created by the same means they were. For reasons she didn't even fully understand he chose to serve the Aesir and her specifically, acting as her guardian and protector.

It was he who Ask needed to thank, she said, for he was the one who picked up his scent.

Tamfana bid the hunter a good day and like Hanskar vanished into the ether. Ask, confused and unsure what to make of it all, continued his hunt, which turned out to be successful, he bagged several deer.

In the summer of 3049 BC Embla gave birth to their first child, a son they named Jarl. In the following four years they had two more children, both sons. Karl in 3047 BC and Thrain in 3046 BC.

By 3043 BC Ask and Embla had established themselves well on the island, their family flourishing and in 3041 BC they welcomed their first and only daughter, Tamfana, named after the Goddess who's guardian intervened to save Ask.

In the autumn of 3040 BC Odin, keeping his word, returned with one hundred people, fifty men, fifty women, all taken from what is now the forests of Germany, each one his direct descendant.

These humans descended from Mannus, the first man born in Germany many, many centuries before, the son of Tuisto, one of Odin's sons by his wife Frigga, Queen of Asgard, and a human woman from what is now Austria.

Mannus' descendants became, along with Jarl, Karl, Thrain and Tamfana, the foundation of the Germanic people. Ask and Embla were bestowed the title of Chieftain and Chieftess by Odin and given the responsibility of building up a society.

They succeeded in laying the building blocks and within a hundred years three villages were thriving on Greenland, each ruled by a Chief descended from Jarl, Karl, and Thrain.

Ask passed away peacefully in 3020 BC and Embla in 3016 BC. They were buried where Nuuk, the capital of Greenland, now stands, each laid to rest with a Wolf and Raven statue, both recognized as symbols of their people and of their faith in the Aesir.

Chapter 2: The Samothen Empire

In the years following the passing of Ask and Embla their descendants continued to expand their communities, seeing more villages built and agriculture begun with hunting acting as a secondary source of food.

While never unified in a political sense, each village acting independently of the other, the people, called Germanii by Odin, which means 'Children of the Earth' denoting their creation from earth based materials, had a sense of kinship and identity. They spoke the same language, worshiped the same Gods and Goddesses, and conducted the same rituals.

The very first days of the Germanic culture were relatively peaceful ones given their initial isolation from other people, but even so they quickly developed a warrior tradition, one

brought over from Germany where the men and women had been tribal warriors from various tribes long since forgotten.

This tradition put personal courage and honour above all else. Each able bodied adult, male or female, was expected to fight if called upon, cowardice wasn't tolerated under any circumstances. These ideals also took root in hunting where bravery was paramount and honour in terms of respecting the animal and making sure the kill was clean and as painless as possible was essential.

For centuries the Germanic people lived like this, and slowly expanded to what is now Iceland, establishing villages there.

Throughout all these years Ask and Embla's descendants played leadership roles as Chiefs, warriors and priests. The woman who led the first colonizing effort to Iceland in 2878 BC, Aldis, a priestess of Freya and a warrior, was a direct descendant of Thrain. Aldis and her company of one hundred families built a village near the coast.

She ruled the village as Chieftain until her death in 2855 BC and was succeeded by her son Thorin who's bloodline would continue to govern the village, Audborg, into the 18th century BC, leading explorations across Iceland and establishing new towns, before ultimately giving way to another family and receding into the mists of time.

Other descendants of Ask and Embla found their way to modern day Baffin island in Northern Canada where they made contact with the indigenous people there.

This expedition, undertaken in 2875 BC, not long after Aldis left for Iceland, was led by Marten and Mani, twin brothers, one named after the animal of the same name and the other in honour of the God of the Moon, who sailed with a crew to the island in early summer.

Here the brothers came upon an indigenous man and his family fishing on a rock. Not speaking the same language and quite clearly being distinct peoples, the two sides observed each other cautiously.

The twins, backed by ten armed men, weren't afraid of the man and the two other adult men in his company, the rest being a woman and three small children. But they wanted to avoid trouble if they could possibly help it.

Marten, cautiously reaching into his bag, pulled out venison from reindeer, holding it up to the man, a peace offering of sorts. When the Native gestured he wanted the meat Marten stepped off his vessel and touched land, placing it down on a rock close to the family without getting too near himself.

The Native man took it and nodded in acknowledgement and Marten got back inside his boat, the two sides parting amicably.

This interaction set up a long trading relationship between the Germanic people and the Baffin island Natives spanning generations after Marten and Mani passed on, their descendants continuing the tradition and exploring the Canadian coast, going to modern day Nova Scotia, Prince

Edward Island, and New Brunswick. In Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island in particular Germanic groups took pains to build seasonal settlements along the coasts.

One such settlement on modern day Cape Breton Island known as Ormstead after Orm the Talker, a great grandson of Mani and the Skald of his village back in Greenland, became a year round home for over twenty families who, coexisting with the Native peoples of the island, managed to make a decent living. Orm married a Native woman who adopted the Germanic name of Embla in honour of Orm's ancestress, and other Germanic men and women married Native spouses as well.

Orm's children with this Embla would eventually migrate back to Greenland and marry the descendants of Marten, but the settlement Orm founded lasted until 1500 BC when its people, by now a mixture of Native Canadian (for lack of a better term) and Germanic, decided to make another migration to find a better land, which will be discussed later in the book.

The seasonal settlement on Prince Edward Island also gave way to intermarriage, the Native wives returning to Greenland with their husbands in the winter season and going back in the summertime. Unlike the Cape Breton village this settlement never did become year round home but it did last just as long, the last person to use it being a certain Harald Sigmundsson in 1503 BC, and who, like the people of Ormstead, migrated in 1500 BC.

Things continued on this path for the Germanic people until 2200 BC when sudden change came in the form of an invasion fleet led by a King named Samoths who was intent on taking their home.

Descended from Meshach, a grandson of the biblical Patriarch Noah through his son Japheth who led a group of Sumerian refugees to what is now the island of Britain in the years after the flood, Samoths was the first man to unite the entire Island under his rule after the last reset of civilization. Doing it a year before he set his sights on the Germanic homeland.

A vain man, he named his Kingdom Samothea after himself and within the same year he united his Kingdom he crossed the English channel and conquered portions of modern France which is where he first learned of Greenland for Germanic sailors, having honed their seafaring skills, had made their way into Europe by this time, trading with the people who would become known as Gauls many centuries later.

In all Samoths brought ten ships, his force a thousand strong. He chose Greenland not for any material resource, but simply because he wanted more land to add to his realm, he wanted an Empire.

The paramount leader on Greenland at the time was Hrolf Sweynsson, a descendant of Orm and a priest of Odin. He was also one of the earliest berserkers, those Shamanic warriors who donned bearskins and wolfskins and used ritualistic drumming and prayer to enter a frenzied battle state to connect with the Allfather, the Master of War, Spear Shaker.

Hrolf gathered every able bodied adult he could find once a scout reported seeing ships off the coast and sent the young teenagers and children further inland to another village. He had no way of knowing how many men were onboard the incoming ships but whatever the number he couldn't back down, not if he wanted to keep his position as High Chieftain, and more importantly, if he wanted to keep the invaders from destroying his home.

The Samothean fleet landed an hour later, dozens of soldiers, both from continental Europe and the British Isles, leapt into the waters and waded ashore, being met by Germanic warriors who, using their bronze axes, war clubs, spears, and swords, cleaved into them as fast as they came.

Hrolf, black and white war paint on his face, was among the first in the fray, his battle axe swinging and hacking madly, blood splattering onto his face, into his mouth and eyes. Like Germanic martial tradition dictated he led from the front, giving little thought to his personal safety, his axe blade coming down on one unfortunate Somathean after another, the water around him turning crimson red.

The Germanic warriors put up a valiant fight but it proved little good. Samothas and his men pushed them back, leaving over a hundred dead as they retreated inland, Hrolf leading the survivors to Almrskogholt, the closest village to his own ruled by a cousin, Freydis.

Another Chieftain, Lofnir, brought fifty warriors to Almrskogholt within the hour, bringing the total number of

able fighters to two hundred, still ridiculous number when compared to the invaders.

Regardless of this Hrolf, unwilling to lay down and surrender yet, rallied his people, calling upon Odin and Tyr, the Germanic God of War and Justice, to bear witness to their courage and give them the strength to hold off the invading forces.

But they never came, instead setting up camp on the beach, Samoths believing he scared the natives into submission. Hrolf used this to his advantage.

Later that night the High Chieftain, along with a hundred warriors dressed in war paint, snuck down towards the beach, watching from the shadows as the enemy feasted and drank, singing songs from back home to lift their spirits in this foreign land.

Everyone knew they wouldn't be able to drive them back, there was just too many, but Hrolf wanted to inflict as much damage as he could before the inevitable surrender happened.

At midnight Hrolf stood up from his hiding place and beat his drum, chanting as his warriors descended upon the Samotheans, taking them completely by surprise as hoped and delivering a devastating slaughter to their ranks, mangling to kill up to two hundred of them before being forced to fall back.

This attack left the Samotheans in shambles for the next two days, allowing Hrolf to bolster his forces with a hundred more warriors, but he needn't have bothered. On the third day of the invasion Samoths sent a messenger, a continental European who understood the Germanic language, to seek peace between the two peoples.

In his message Samoths made it plain he intended on taking the Island whether Hrolf and the other Chieftains consented or not. He hoped, however, they would not resist but surrender willingly and become part of his growing realm. Their ferocity as fighters impressed him, especially the women as he had never seen such female warriors.

Hrolf, Freydis, and Lofnir asked the King to give them two days to talk it over, to which Samoths agreed. In that time the Chieftains met in Freydis' home, debating the merits of surrender and the merits of resistance, eventually agreeing the merits of resistance were few, unless one wanted an easy trip to Odin's Great Hall or Freya's Fields.

As much as they hated the idea the three Chieftains accepted Samoths' peace offer, laying down their arms and allowing the Island to become part of the Kingdom of Samothea, the Island being called the province of Almrskogholt by Samoths in an awkward attempt to appeal to his new subjects, placing Hrolf as Governor over the province.

Soon after the annexation of Almrskogholt into the Samothean Kingdom Samothés, staying on the Island for the next few months to consolidate his rule, turned his focus to Iceland where news of his conquest had brought the Island together under one ruler for the first time in its history, Gudrun Wermundsdottir, who took the title of Queen in defiance of Samothés and his vision of conquest.

Hrolf and the others, knowing the bloodshed that would ensue should an invasion take place, visited Iceland in early winter to speak with Gudrun. The self proclaimed Queen received them in her village and treated them well, understanding why they surrendered, but she believed her people could hold out longer and endure better.

Hrolf, anxious to make her see reason, explained how Samothés could summon far more men and resources than they could, fighting was futile. The Germanic people needed to make due with what the Gods had placed before them, he said, the Allfather would not want them throwing their lives away for nothing.

But, stubborn and refusing to listen, Gudrun bid them good day and left, returning to her home to her husband and children.

The envoys left a day after they arrived, informing the King of her choice. Samothés, now knowing how resilient these people could be, did not take any chances. He sent word back to Samothea for more men and by the middle of summer he had over three thousand warriors at his command.

Two hundred of them were Germanic warriors led by Hrolf, who, despite loathing the idea, decided to join the campaign to show his new Lord he meant to remain loyal to the Kingdom.

Gudrun was doing what she believed was best for her people, he was doing the same.

On August 23rd, 2199 BC Samothean forces set off from Greenland towards Iceland, landing on the southern coast in hopes of taking the Queen by surprise. Of course with such a large force it was unlikely that would happen, and it didn't.

Gudrun took her warriors to face the Samotheans, meeting them close to what is now the town of Selfoss in Arborg municipality. Whether or not she knew of Germanic soldiers in their ranks is not known but she saw them when the two sides met as the Greenlandic warriors, painted in their war paint, some bare chested showing their tattoos, fought in the front ranks.

Hrolf himself went into battle like this, a Wolf head tattoo on his right arm. He wore no war paint this time, his long black hair plaited down his back to keep out of his eyes. As one of many Captains he didn't give a speech to his men, but like every fight or hunt he called upon Odin and the Aesir to watch over him and those he fought beside.

He also asked Freya to accept Gudrun into Folkvangr when the battle was done, certain she would die fighting on the field.

And she did, as well as three hundred of her followers while the Samotheans lost a hundred of their thousands strong army, ten of which were of Hrolf's war band.

Gudrun's body was given back to her husband Jarl to bury by Samoths, the King admiring her courage in the face of certain death and in her honour he named his new possession the province of Gudrun. He also named Gudrun's eldest sons Hemming and Dag Governors of the province, making the positions hereditary.

In the following decades Samoths settled many Samotheans on Gudrun and Almrskogholt in order to bring the Germanic people in line with the culture of his Kingdom. This resulted in intermarriage and cross cultural exchanges but the descendants of Ask, Embla, and Mannus never abandoned their ancestral ways, but added to them with Samothean traditions such as the worship and belief in the Annunaki Gods of Sumeria and the veneration of the Dragon as a divine bringer of wisdom, Hrolf taking the Dragon as his personal family crest.

Hrolf married a niece of Samoths named Nadala who was, through her maternal grandmother Ishanna, a descendant of King Sargon of Akkad. Her father, Nabeel, was the older brother of Samoths and Governor of his provinces on the French coast.

The two had one son together, Widukind, born in 2180 BC, who was declared a Prince of Samothea by Samoths on his

birth as a gift for Hrolf's loyal service to the Empire he was building.

Hrolf served as Governor until 2170 BC, during which time he helped Samoths conquer Baffin Island and half of what is now the Canadian territory of Nunavut, leading a band of Germanic fighters against the Native tribes they used to be friendly with.

Retiring in old age Hrolf passed the Chieftainship to his younger cousin Arnbjorn who also took over the Governorship until Widukind came of age.

In 2167 BC Samoths passed away due to illness, which appears to have been lung cancer, and was succeeded by his eldest son Magus. Magus, unlike his father, was more devoted to religion and mysticism than warfare but even so his nobles in Samothea, desiring to keep the glory of the Empire alive, pushed him to do more conquests.

Magus gave in and set about conquering all of modern France, which he completed in 2155 BC, and in the latter half of this campaign Widukind Hrolfsson was in his army, leading the warriors of his province (Hrolf died in 2158). Widukind, like his father, was a priest, dedicated to Thor, and also like his father he was a berserker, using this battle frenzy technique several times in Europe.

While the Germanic component of the Samothean army was small in comparison to other parts Magus recognized his cousin's contribution in the Battle of Carnen, which was the

name the Samothean King gave the Seine river, where Widukind and his warriors, building a bridge across, rushed the enemy and killed over a dozen before taking their leader, a woman named Sesca, captive and bringing her before Magus.

Sesca, a red haired twenty three year old Chieftess of a tribe known as the Neromi, refused to bow before the King, being forced by his men. He tried conversing with her in her language, having picked it up during his studies, but she did not reply.

Magus, having little time to spare, ordered Sesca to be bound in chains and shipped back across the English Channel but, he made clear, she was to be treated with respect and dignity as her station demanded.

Sesca, who remained in Samothea the rest of her life, first as a prisoner and then a freed woman, was just one of many tribal Chiefs who fell during the campaign of Magus. Widukind seeing service throughout the latter half, leaving Arnbjorn as regnant until he returned in 2154 BC.

Upon his return a crisis befell the two Germanic provinces when Germundur, the grandson of Gudrun, rose up in rebellion with his sister Astrella and together with Baffin Island Natives invaded Widukind's territory intent on killing him and establishing a Germanic Kingdom under them.

Gathering his forces, which comprised Germanic and Samothean soldiers, the veteran Commander met the siblings

near present day Nuuk, letting them gain a false sense of victory getting so far inland, before descending on them and decimating their army, slaughtering each and every one, Widukind ordering no quarter be shown.

When the battle of Ask, the name Widukind bestowed it in honour of his ancestor, was finished he ordered every body sent back to either Gudrun or Baffin Island to receive their last rites. He then sent a letter to Magus explaining what occurred.

In response the King stripped Gudrun's descendants of their hereditary Governorship and transferred it to Widukind and his family. He also gave Widukind his sister Naamah's hand in marriage.

To help him govern Widukind appointed his cousin Borri, son of Arnbjorn, as Commander of Gudrun with the rights and powers he enjoyed in his province. Good friends, the two cousins ruled the provinces into the 2130s, with Magus focusing on building schools of learning and establishing his Empire's defenses rather than expansion now that he had all of what is now France under his rule before he died in 2143.

His son, Sarron, at first continued these policies and brought over more immigrants from the Middle East, chiefly Sumerians and Akkadians, some even settling in small numbers in Almrskogholt and Gudrun, but soon, whether by his own design or listening to advisors, Sarron decided to continue the conquests of his father.

In this vein he sent out word to his provinces asking for troops. They responded. The Governor of Kelta, the name for the province Magus conquered in France, his younger brother Simon, brought over to Samothea a thousand men and women, most native Keltians.

In Almrskogholt and Gudrun Widukind and Borri answered with six hundred warriors which would become the vanguard of the invasion force of the King, Sarron seeking to conquer more lands in North America.

To this end he completed the conquest of what is now Nunavut and swept into the present day Yukon, taking it in 2137 BC. From there Sarron's army, allying with Native tribes who wished to beat their enemies, pushed into the present day Northwest territories, Widukind and Borri still leading their warriors, now a mixed band of Native Canadian and Germanic men and women, in the front lines.

From the Northwest territories the Samothean and Native force pushed into modern Alberta, conquering it from the regional tribes. Here, while fighting a tribe near modern day Medicine Hat, Borri was killed by an arrow which caught him in the face. Widukind, in a grief filled frenzy, took down his killer and hacked off his head, taking it as a prize, having the fleshly bits taken off and made into a skull cup. Borri was buried on land which has since been covered over by Alberta's Highway 41.

Alberta fell by 2134 BC and then what is now Saskatchewan and Manitoba by 2131 BC, Sarron relentlessly pushing his

forces to conquer more and more land. Once present day Manitoba came under the Samothean Crown he halted his expansion campaign, wishing to consolidate his holdings and begin the process of colonizing his new territory and using them for resources.

As for Widukind and his men they finally returned home, Borri's son Arnoth and his younger brother Ulfric being left in charge of the provinces. Widukind's children, twins, a son, Torolf, and a daughter, Bestla, were still small children, having been born shortly before his departure.

There would be no more wars for Widukind or for the Empire during Sarron's reign as the King, feeling accomplished in the lands he'd taken. He appointed one Governor, a Sumerian man named Harran who originally hailed from Uruk, to oversee the new territories which he named Kengir, the name the Sumerians called their land which meant 'land of the noble Lords', Sarron envising a vast and great province full of houses of learning and military men.

Kengir, as it turned out, became somewhat in between. Inhabited mainly by the Native tribes who had lived there for millennia before any Samothean or Germanic person stepped foot there, it did become the destination for several thousand immigrants over the course of the Samothean Empire's existence, many choosing to live in what is now the Canadian West as opposed to up North.

The Northwest territories, Yukon,, Nunavut, and Baffin Island would remain, for the most part, the extreme frontiers of the

Kingdom. Some families moved there, particularly Germanic ones who settled in the Yukon and Nunavut regions.

The most prominent was the family of Ognir Wulfsson who would grow numerous in the following generations, becoming the richest Clan and building several homes and financing villages. They even sponsored a fortress on Baffin Island to protect the territories and which a great grandson of Ognir, Thorbjorn, was placed in command of.

In the Canadian Western portions it was more Sumerian and Samothean immigrants and the Native population already established who made the region flourish and it was here where Harran took up residence, not being able to handle the cooler climate up North.

Harran's family joined him and his two sons, Ishi-Sin and Sargon, married Native women and joined their communities, seeing his family eventually disappear into the forests of Lower Canada as his grandchildren migrated beyond the Empire's current borders into present day Quebec.

Apart from building up his colonies Sarron also put money into financing schools of learning and passing a law throughout his Kingdom that all citizens, regardless of their station, would be permitted to learn how to read and write. Education wasn't compulsory, but those who wished to learn could do so without needing to be part of the noble classes.

This led Widukind, using money from the province's treasury, to pay for universal education for the people, starting with

the young ones in Greenland and Iceland learned how to read and write in Sumerian, but a year after this education program began Odin appeared to Widukind in a dream, giving him the Runes, telling him he had passed it on to other peoples he created in the past and now wanted the Germanii to use them.

Odin explained how he learned about the Runes by hanging himself from the branches of Yggdrasil after piercing his side with his spear Gungnir and soaking the World Tree's roots with his blood. The Rune symbols became clear to him and he passed the knowledge down to humans over the Ages.

The Allfather further instructed Widukind that, given he had no experience in writing, he should seek advice from the Sumerian and Akkadian settlers who had among them educated sons of priests from Eridu who used clay tablets to write on (what we today know as Cuneiform writing).

Upon waking the next day Widukind headed for the Sumerian settlement on the east side of Almrskogholt where he met with a man named Abbi, who was, as Odin said, a son of a priest and knew how to write in Cuneiform.

Widukind explained his dream to the man and asked him to help in forming a writing system for the Germanic people. Abbi consented and the two spent several years devising the Runic system which would become known as Elder Futhark in modern times. They finalized it in 2127 BC and together went about the provinces teaching people how to use it. It took

decades but eventually Sumerian gave way to the people's own unique writing system.

This was the last, and most important, contribution Widukind made to his people as he died not long after in 2125 BC in an fishing accident, drowning in the icy waters off of the coast, his body never recovered.

His son Torolf, still young, became Chieftain and Governor symbolically while Naamah acted as regnant until he came of age in 2113 BC, as Naamah, enjoying the taste of power, held on to it for longer than she should have, but Torolf managed to become Governor and ruled the provinces peacefully for many years.

His first real taste of conflict came in 2100 BC when King Sarron died and his son Druis succeeded to the throne of Samothea. Almost immediately tension broke out between Druis and his younger brother Bardus who contended he was unfit to rule due to the fact he was not, in fact, Sarron's son.

Bardus accused his mother, Teema, of adultery with an unnamed nobleman at Court and quickly raised a rebellion to plant himself on the throne. His claim was baseless but those who disliked Druis aligned themselves with the younger son of Sarron and soon Samothea fell into Civil War.

The North American provinces, far away from the fighting, were still not free from conflict. Kengir's Governor, Ashur, a relative of Harran who took over when the latter died in 2105 BC, supported Bardus and went to work shoring up support

for him in the realm, fighting skirmishes with the Ognir Wulfsson Clan in the North who supported Druis, who used the fortress on Baffin Island to keep themselves and their allies safe from attack, Ashur lacking the necessary equipment to lay siege to it.

On Almrskogholt and Gudrun Torolf was undecided. both men were untested in the ways of Kingship, either could be a good King or a bad one. To Torolf personally it made little difference if Druis was Sarron's biological son as the man raised him as if he were, but slowly his noblemen, both native Germanii and the Sumerians and Akkadians, voiced support for Bardus. Even those who didn't support Bardus noted how, if Ashur focused his attention on them after the Wulfsson family was defeated, there was no gurantee it wouldn't be a deadly war.

In the end, as much as he felt disgust at betraying his Lord, one of the most vile things according to Germanic tradition, Torolf chose to align himself with Ashur and the rebel faction. Leading four hundred warriors over into Kengir he linked up with the Governor and helped him crush any opposition to Bardus' rights to the throne.

Meanwhile in what is now Quebec another rebel was rising, but not in support of Bardus but for his own people.

His name was Nanna, Chief of the Moconish people, one of the many Native tribes who, once they lost their lands in the Canadian West, mirgated into the thick forests for safety and freedom.

Nanna, a grandson of Harran, rejected his foreign blood and pledged to wipe the invaders from the Plains and restore it to the Moconish.

Of course the Moconish weren't the original inhabitants of ALL the plains but Nanna conveniently ignored this when spreading his patriotic fervor in his village's tipis. Within two weeks he had a host of fifty warriors under him and, allying himself with the Nioka, a tribe indigenous to present day Quebec, he bolstered this number to two hundred.

The Nioka, led by an middle aged Chief known as Red Hand, or Papenocena in the Nioka language, feared that Imperial ambitions might take hold of the new King of Samothea and desired to show they could not be conquered so easily.

In June of 2100 BC the Moconish and Nioka left the forests of eastern Canada and advanced onto the plains, most using bronze hatchets or war clubs and spears, using the invader's weapons to their advantage.

Like their successors thousands of years later on the American and Canadian frontiers, the Moconish and Nioka targetted whoever they could, striking isolated villages on the priarie, killing most and taking a small number of captives to use as slaves.

To Nanna and Red Hand this treatment was warranted as many Native families suffered at the hands of the advancing Samothean forces, losing children, wives, and mothers to death or slavery.

In all ten villages, two Germanic and seven Sumerian, fell to the Moconish and Nioka warriors before a proper response could be mustered, but not by Ashur but by a Sumerian man named Sin-Abbal, who was simply one of many Middle Eastern immigrants who happened to choose the Canadian West as the place to begin anew.

He was no nobleman or priest, but a farmer with no military experience. Even so he mustered a force of one hundred men from his village and another one hundred from another and marched against the Natives, meeting them close to what is now Edmonton in what became known as the Battle of Red Hand to the Moconish and Nioka due to that Chief's bravery and tactics, flanking the settlers on their right and left, trying to surround them, and nearly managed to succeed.

But, thinking on his feet, Sin-Abbal, who was riding a horse and commanding a makeshift band of cavalry, led a charge against the Chief and his men on the left side, killing Red Hand and seventy of the Nioka warriors under him.

On the right flank another Sumerian, Addesh, brother to Sin-Abbal, took on Nanna and his men, meeting them on foot in hand to hand combat.

Nanna died early in the fight, struck down by an unknown hand as he yelled encouragement to his men, but his warriors continued to fight for over an hour before being forced back, dragging his and Red Hand's bodies back with them.

The Battle of Red Hand or, to the Sumerians, the Battle of Enki's Eye as they believed the God of Magic and Wisdom and friend of humanity cast his eyes on them, thus giving them the victory, resulted in most of the Native forces being killed or wounded, driving the survivors back into present day Eastern Canada where they licked their wounds.

The Moconish and Nioka would regroup and launch another attack in early August, hitting the Germanic villages of Odenborg and Kelstag on August 5th and August 8th respectively, killing twenty people in all.

These attacks were led by renowned Nioka warrior Tondacona, Black Swallow, who was the veteran of numerous raids and battles in the Eastern Canadian forests but who, nearing seventy, decided to remain at home during Red Hand's campaign due to his age.

Now, losing Red Hand and most of their men brought the elder out of retirement and as his raids proved, his age did not prevent him from wreaking havoc when he chose to do so.

On August 12th Black Swallow raided the Sumerian village of Utu-Pal, burning it to the ground and killing all of its one hundred citizens, men, women, and children. The destruction of Utu-Pal would be the final raid which went unanswered as Ashur and Torolf came down from the North to meet Black Swallow's forces in open battle.

It was a slaughter on both sides. The Nioka Chief, his battle scarred body gleaming in the hot sun from sweat, killed over

ten Germanic and Samothean soldiers and led his warriors to kill over three hundred more, somehow delivering a harsh blow despite their small size.

Among the dead was Ashur, cut down by a war club to the side of his head, popping it like a balloon, his brains and blood gushing out onto the prairie grass. Torolf managed to survive the battle, named the Battle of Ashur's End in honour of the fallen Governor, and take Black Swallow prisoner.

With the province leaderless Torolf decided to take control in the interim believing he had little choice and, as he was a royal Governor in his own right, he thought he was the right candidate.

He took Black Swallow and fifty of his men back to Almrskogholt where he put them on trial for murder. They stood before a Council composed of Torolf and five other descendants of Ask and Embla, Alva Magnusdottir, Mathnelda Freysdottir, Brunwulf the Light Hearted, Agild Black Hand, and Cynric Bredasson.

Before they began Torolf took an oath from each Council member, sworn before Odin, Tyr, and Thor, to be impartial and listen to both sides of the conflict. They swore on their arm rings, sacred symbols of trust and loyalty between men and the Gods.

With the oaths taken Torolf ordered Black Swallow and his men to be brought into the Council Hall and sat before them. He greeted the Chief with the help of a Sumerian man who,

having traded in Eastern Canada for several years, knew the Nioka tongue.

Black Swallow returned the greeting, thanking the Chieftain for his kindness and hospitality in spite of them being enemies. Torolf told him he was not his enemy, that he held no grudge against the Nioka or the Moconish and even understood why they fought as they did.

Still, as a servant of the Samothean Kingdom he couldn't let their campaign continue, which brought them all there.

The elderly man, his once raven black hair now peppered with white spots, his face cragged with the passing of time, did not say much in return. He stated he regretted only that he could not keep his people safe and help the Moconish regain their homeland.

Torolf asked him if he would be able to live in peace with the Samotheans now that the war was over. Black Swallow shook his head, explaining he was old, his time had past, and he would fight until he took his last breath in the hopes of victory, no matter how remote it may seem to the invaders.

His warriors echoed this sentiment, leaving Torolf unsure how to proceed, and making the other Council members hostile, even if they did take their oaths to be impartial.

The Chieftain ordered the Nioka leader and his men to be taken out so that they could deliberate. Most of the council save Brunwulf the Light Hearted who, living up to his byname, wished to spare the men from death, favored execution,

pointing out the elderly Chief's own admission of wishing to continue the war if he could.

Torolf, like Brunwolf, did not want to pass the death sentence to men who were not outright murderers, at least not in his view, but only trying to defend their people and help allies regain their lands.

The option of sending Black Swallow and the others to Samothea was not possible given the Civil War raging there. As much as Torolf disagreed with the idea of execution he was not all powerful, his Council members had equal say and while it was true he, as Governor, had final authority, he was a stickler for Germanic tradition and rules of law.

Torolf sentenced Black Swallow to die.

On September 3rd, 2100 BC, the Nioka elder and his men were marched out from the home they were housed in and brought before Torolf who, as Chieftain, would carry out the execution himself.

He drew his sword, a blade handed down from his grandfather Hrolf, and had men hold Black Swallow and the others forward, bearing their necks. One by one starting with the elderly warrior Torolf beheaded them, giving orders for their bodies to be shipped back to their tribe for burial while their heads would be buried on the Island as proof he had done the deed.

This marked the end of Nioka and Moconish resistance to Samothean settlement in the Canadian West and North, and it

also marked the final episode of the Samothean Civil War in the North American provinces, but across the Atlantic the war would continue for another four months until January 1st, 2099 when Bardus caught his brother's forces off guard while they drank from the Thames river and overwhelmed them, killing Druis and dozens of others, declaring himself King after.

The death of Druis so suddenly caused the royalist faction to collapse, most surrendering to Bardus and praying for mercy while some, believing he wasn't a man to know mercy, fled abroad to parts of Europe still untouched by Samothea's reach.

And they were the smart ones. Bardus was ruthless in his elimination of all those who stood with his brother, executing them one by one on both sides of the Atlantic, Torolf being the one to carry out the orders in North America, killing up to forty nobles in Kengir who supported Druis.

2099 BC may have begun bloody but Bardus, while a ruthless man when he believed he needed to be, was also an artist and historian, and for the rest of that year he settled down to administrative duties and in his spare time began a history of the Samothean Kingdom up to the beginning of his reign, a work which would take him ten years to fully complete and which would remain a valuable source of information for later writers in the following centuries.

In 2098 BC Bardus, maintaining his father's contacts with the Middle East, welcomed envoys from the Xia Kingdom in present day Henan province, China.

The Xia King, Qi, had heard of a great Empire growing in the West and, having expansionist ambitions of his own, sought to forge a friendship with the monarch of Somathea and sent envoys into Sumeria knowing of their contacts.

Bardus, intrigued to hear of this Far Eastern Kingdom wanting to create an alliance, took the extra step of actually going to Xia himself. One may think it was a risking move to leave his Kingdom within a year of taking it by force but Bardus felt differently and went ahead with his plans.

To accompany him on this voyage he hired a host of Germanic warriors who had lived in Samothea for a few years and fought for his brother. The leader of this band was Alfric Kolfisson, a veteran of Sarron's campaigns in the North and a bear of a man, thick with muscle and what one would imagine if they pictured the stereotypical Viking warrior minus the horned helmet.

Alfric and his band weren't particularly concerned about the why of their trip or going so far away from the Empire. Payment was their chief desire, that and good alcohol, both of which Bardus supplied in good measure.

It took the King of Samothea and his hardy band of Germanic bodyguards a year to reach China where they were brought to the capital of Xia, Yangcheng, and met King Qi in person.

Qi, a descendant of the first man to rule China as a unified country, Gongsun Xuanyuan, known as the Yellow Emperor, was nothing like Bardus expected. He was a sickly looking

man, pale but still surprisingly handsome. The two men sat and had dinner together, Alfric and his men standing guard around them along with the Xia royal soldiers.

Qi informed Bardus he wanted an alliance with a Western power to expand his own territory as China in his time was not a united Empire as it had once been under his ancestor and he wished to remedy that. He would, in turn, offer Samothea the finest metals, foods, fabrics, and other materials from his lands, as well as his daughter Nuwei in marriage.

Bardus, single and unmarried at the time, took an interest in this proposal but Qi wasn't finished. He wanted all these things to come to pass but there was one condition.

Bardus needed to help him in these conquests personally, not just give weapons. Qi wanted Samothean troops on the ground.

To this the King didn't even flinch. He accepted the condition happily, stating his bodyguard would be the first of his troops to serve. Alfric and his men, caught off guard by this, didn't raise much of an objection once Qi promised to pay them in full.

A week later the band of Germanic mercenaries were off fighting in Hu county against rebel forces while Bardus married Nuwei in Yangcheng. Alfric and his men would never return West as after serving the Xia King they decided they

liked the country and settled down as farmers, becoming the first Germanic people to permanently reside in China.

Alfric married a Chinese woman and had several sons, all of whom would eventually migrate to the West, finding themselves in Almrskogholt where they settled thirty years later.

Given a squad of Xia bodyguards to accompany him back home Bardus departed with Nuwei back to Samothea. Nuwei would give birth to a son a year later in 2097 who they named Longho.

Once back in Samothea Bardus focused on governance and art, diligently working on his history and the rest of the decade past peacefully throughout the Samothean realm.

In this time Torolf married Alva Magnussdottir and had a daughter with her he named Gunnhilda who was born in 2090 BC.

The rest of Bardus' reign was peaceful, his main achievements being his history The Deeds Of Samothes and the institutions of learning he built on mainland Samothea, centers of spirituality, history, and storytelling.

His name was so connected to storytelling in later years in fact that his name became the origin of the title Bard in British society, the Samotheans being among ancestors of the Britons. Bardus died in 2070 BC, succeeded by Longho.

In North America Torolf lived until 2063 BC and in his middle age Longho, taken by the spirit of his ancestors to be a

conqueror, called upon him to marshal the Germanic troops once more for another invasion of continental North America.

The fear of Black Swallow had come to pass, the Samotheans, not content with what they already possessed, moved into present day Eastern Canada in May, 2068 BC, battling the Nioka tribe and others.

The battles, fought as they were in the thick woodlands and along (and on) riverways, proved difficult for the Samothean forces, getting bogged down early in the invasion and staying like that until middle July when they broke through and penetrated deep inside Native territory.

Of the numerous Chiefs who resisted them One Paw of the Nishpac, a people who lived on the island where the city of Montreal now stands, was the man who offered the most challenge as he had united three other tribes with his own. One Paw led a stiff resistance campaign from July 2068 into the next year, Longho unable to take the island and losing over a thousand men over this time to the Nishpac and their allies.

By May of 2067 BC things started to turn around for the Samotheans when the Nishpac and their allies finally started running out of supplies, bringing them close to starvation.

Longho sent a messenger across the water to discuss peace talks, but the woman, a Germanic priestess of Nerthus named Torva, was shot full of arrows by the Nishpac, her corpse

visible for hours before it slipped underneath the warm waters.

Torva's death sealed the Island's fate. Longho ordered every regiment, every soldier onto it. He ordered the children to be spared but did not specify about adults, young or old.

Torolf, still carrying his grandfather's sword, led his warriors onto the Island and like all the rest he killed indiscriminately, feeling duty bound to obey his Lord's wishes.

In the aftermath of the massacre One Paw's body was burned on Longho's orders, his ashes thrown into the waters to appease Torva's spirit. The surviving children were sent to tribes allied with the Samotheans with strict orders from the King to treat them kindly and raise them as their own.

One child, however, didn't go. Her name was Suna. Torolf found her cowering underneath her mother's dead body in the hours after the final battle.

It took some time to coax the girl, who was no more than seven, to come out to him, but she finally did. Torolf offered her a piece of mutton he had and she took it, eating hungrily. Taking her by the hand the Chieftain approached the King, asking him if he may adopt the child.

Longho consented and Torolf took a leave of absence to take Suna back to Almrskogholt, remaining there for a month to get her properly adjusted. When he left he entrusted her care to Alva and Gunnhilda, both of whom took to her as if she was one of their own kin.

By 2064 BC what is now Quebec and Ontario were under Longho's control and absorbed into the province of Kengir. He moved on to present day Nova Scotia next, absorbing it and New Brunswick a year later, at which point he quenched his thirst for conquest, at least in North America.

Reports were coming in even as he campaigned in Eastern Canada about the richness of Egypt, how it was a bread basket of a Kingdom and would be a boon to any who controlled it.

Upon the conquest of Nova Scotia the Samothean King returned to Samothea to rest his forces and rebuild his military.

In 2060 BC he launched his attack on Egypt, and Gunnhilda, Chieftess of Almrskogholt and Governor, was in his ranks, commanding a combined force of Germanic and Native Canadian warriors.

The Pharaoh was still a young teenager, barely sixteen, but when he learned of the invasion of his Kingdom he wasted little time in preparing his army.

Neferkamin Anu, son of the late Pharaoh Neferkare Pepiseneb, ruled Egypt at a time where, while the country was prosperous in terms of economy and agriculture, politically it wasn't very stable.

His family, known today as the Eighth Dynasty, held the throne by force of will, having usurped it from the

descendants of Narmer when they invaded from Anatolia, modern Turkey, several generations back.

Though Anatolian on both sides of his family Neferkamin Anu was Egyptian by birth and upbringing, raised to be King of the Black Land, as Egyptians called their Kingdom, and he was determined to defeat the invaders.

The young King, ruling from Memphis, led his army out against Longho and the Samotheans, meeting them along the Nile in a decisive clash. The Pharaoh's bravery and determination didn't win him the victory, however, and the more experienced Longho defeated him within the day, forcing him to fall back to his capital, which the Samothean King took as well, forcing Neferkamin Anu to surrender to him unconditionally in order to spare the lives of his men.

Longho, admiring the young man's courage and not wishing to rob him of his life at such a young age, proposed a deal to him and his advisors.

Partition Egypt, Longho said, between them. He would rule Upper Egypt, his capital at the city of Thebes, and Neferkamin Anu would rule Lower Egypt, keeping Memphis, the greatest city of the Kingdom, and named after its founder, the Greek Queen Memphis, who ruled over the city with her husband Epaphus during the predynastic period in Egypt before the country was unified for the first time under Mizraim, known in Egyptian as Narmer, son of Ham and grandson of Noah, in his hands.

The Egyptian King had little choice but to agree and so the Kingdom Narmer founded split in two, with Lower Egypt remaining Egyptian while Upper Egypt became yet another province of the Samothean Empire, Longho being crowned Pharaoh with the White Crown of Upper Egypt, not used by itself since Ka, the last King of Upper Egypt in the Predynastic period.

To govern his new realm Longho selected Intef, who's father, also named Intef, and his grandfather, Mentuhotep , had been Governors for Neferkamin Anu and his father, to rule in his name. Intef's family were descendants of Narmer so it made practical sense.

He even named Intef as Pharaoh alongside him, creating what is today called by Egyptologists the Eleventh Dynasty, though this was merely a symbolic gesture, giving the Upper Egyptians the sense of continuity. That being said Intef did have considerable autonomy as did other Governors of other provinces, and his successors (his descendants) would also receive the title of Pharaoh.

Longho remained in Upper Egypt until the following year when he returned home with his army and dozens of Egyptian scholars, soldiers, and settlers. The settlers found their way to Northern Samothea, what is today lowland Scotland close to the Anglo-Scottish border where they established themselves as merchants and mixed with the population.

Gunnhilda returned to her province and resumed governing while at the same time taking care of Suna and her elderly mother, Alva growing increasingly infirm with age.

In 2057 BC Longho took control of present day Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, bringing them into Kengir's territory, Gunnhilda and her warriors playing a vital role in the Prince Edward Island campaign, leading the assault on several Native fortifications, taking each one, practically winning the Island for the Samotheans.

The only part left of what is today Canada outside of Samothean rule was present day British Columbia but Longho, finally content with his conquests, never made an attempt to conquer it.

He died in 2020 BC, the remainder of his reign passing in peace. He married his first cousin, Jiao, the daughter of King Tai Kang, the son of Qi. Together Longho and Jiao had four children, one son and four daughters. The daughters went on to marry into the Samothean nobility, their bloodlines intermixing with the later Trojan, Greek, and Lydian families who came under Brutus, adding to the mixed heritage of the Britons.

Their son, Bardus II, would become King after his father, and in Upper Egypt he took the regnal name Neferkare. Bardus II was already in his forties when he became King and his own son, Lucas, was in his middle teens and a father to a small baby son, Keltes, born to his wife Terea, an Egyptian woman

and daughter of General Intef, who was no relation to the Governors of Upper Egypt, but named in their honour.

The reign of Bardus II was short lived and largely uneventful, he died in 2017 BC after a hunting accident (his horse reared up and he fell off, cracking his head on a tree stump), leaving Lucas to assume the throne and take on the regnal name Nebkaure Khety in Egypt.

Lucas reign saw an increase in Upper Egyptian immigration West, the King sending them to Kengir to further populate that province. Specifically they settled in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, two of the lowest populated places in his Empire.

The Governor of Kengir at this time was a Germanic man, Jorg the Egyptian, the byname a reflection of where he was born and raised. Jorg was among the first generation of Western people from the Samothean provinces born in Upper Egypt.

Born in 2040 BC Jorg was the son of Keldof Wigmundsson and Aeala Magnusdottir, who served in Longho's conquest of Egypt as young warriors and, falling in love with the country (and each other) during that time, decided to make it their home, settling in the capital of Thebes.

Jorg, not a warrior like his parents, rose through Samothean society by the strength of his wit and intelligence. He served as a courtier in the court of Mentuhotep II, grandson of Intef. During this time Mentuhotep was given orders by Bardus II in

2019 to invade and conquer Lower Egypt, which the Governor carried out immediately.

In the battles that followed Merikare, the Pharaoh of Lower Egypt and grandson of Neferkamin Anu, was slain, ending the Anatolian line of Egyptian Kings and reuniting the country under Bardus II and Mentuhotep. Jorg, having served as a Scribe under Mentuhotep during his campaign, was richly rewarded with wealth as were others upon the fall of Lower Egypt.

In 2017 BC upon the accession of Lucas to the throne Jorg, not above a bit of corruption, paid his way into a Governorship, being placed in Kengir. But, surprisingly, unlike many officials who bribe their way into power Jorg actually knew what he was doing, which is why Luca sent the Egyptians to him, he knew them and their culture better than any other Governor.

The Egyptians became a vital part of Kengir's economy within the decade, Jorg helping them establish shops and granaries. He continued to run Kengir until his death in 2000 BC from a heart attack. His son Rodric assumed his office.

By 1999 BC Lucas too was dead and his son Keltes came to the throne, taking the regnal name Imhotep In Egypt. Keltes' reign was, much like his grandfather's uneventful until the last year of it.

In 1990 BC an invasion force, led by a half Greek, half Hittite Queen named Albina, landed on Samothea's shores, in what is now Dorset.

Albina, the daughter of Inachus, the first King of Argos, was a pirate Queen. Having lost the bid for Argos' throne to her elder brother Phoroneus, the young Princess made the decision to rebel against her father and raised an army of pirates, harassing the Aegean sea and the Argos coast. This, besides winning her infamy, got her nowhere.

So, like any power hungry person who can't have the throne they want, Albina went off in search for another throne to take, settling on Samothrea.

Why she chose Samothrea of all places is unclear. The realm was massive and strong, unlikely to fall from invasion, but Albina wasn't an ordinary pirate.

She used a storm's grey mists to cover her advance, the sentries along the Dorset coast unable to see her until it was too late and by then they were dead, killed by arrows.

On landing in Dorset Albina made deals with local noblemen, promising them tax breaks and more autonomy should they side with her. By the time news reached Keltes of her invasion, she already had hundreds of men in her ranks.

The two sides met on the Dorset-Somerset border where despite her fewer numbers Albina scored a crushing victory over Samothrean forces, killing over eight hundred soldiers within six hours of battle.

Keltes fled back to his capital, where London now stands, but he was betrayed by his nobles who valued their advancement more than loyalty. Seeing the writing on the wall the young

King left the country, fleeing to Egypt where he was received by Mentuhotep and here ruled as Pharaoh but even this did not last long. Mentuhotep died within the month of his arrival, and Amenemhat, a General in Mentuhotep's service, rose up in revolt, seeing his chance at reasserting Egyptian independence.

Keltes fled once more, finding shelter in the city of Memphis where, against all odds, he was able to retain power, but throughout the rest of Egypt Amenemhat, known as Amenemhat I, was recognized as Pharaoh.

Keltes, as Imhotep, would rule Memphis until 1960 BC, marrying an Egyptian woman and having children. But his son, named Samothēs in honour of the founder of his dynasty, would not inherit Memphis' throne. Amenemhat quickly annexed the city upon Keltes' death, reunifying the city with the rest of the Kingdom.

The Pharaoh did not, however, eliminate Keltes' family. Instead he gave them an estate in Upper Egypt and ennobled them. Keltes' descendants would remain in Egypt for many years, biding their time.

Albina, uninterested in Egypt as a province, allowed Amenemhat I to take it, focusing her energies on strengthening her hold on Samothēa, Kelta, Kengir, and Almrskogholt and Gudrun. She did, also, embark on more conquest. From the start of her reign until her death in battle in 1980 BC, Albina waged wars across what is now Germany and Spain, conquering chunks of territory in each land.

She died in the Autumn of 1980 BC, while trying to cross the Rhine to push further into enemy territory, cut down while riding across the very bridge she constructed only months prior, an arrow piercing her forehead.

Her army rallied under her son Machus and he led another invasion, but it managed only to kill and not to conquer, and eventually he retreated, losing the territory his mother gained in the process.

This defeat marked the extent of the Albine Dynasty's conquests, Machus and his descendants mild in temperament and wishing merely to live in peace with those they ruled.

The Albine Dynasty ruled Samothea for one hundred years, the final ruler being Memnon, the great grandson of Machus, who reigned from 1910 BC to 1890 BC.

Memnon, a rather competent ruler, was undone by his unwillingness to take rumours seriously. Chief of these rumours was that in Almrskogholt a young man was trying to raise a rebellion against him.

The young man in question was Galates, a descendant of Keltes, who had grown up in Egypt hearing stories of his ancestors' vast realm, of their grandeur and greatness in battle. From childhood Galates dreamed of returning his family to what he believed was their rightful throne, and at eighteen he set off from Egypt in order to achieve this dream.

He went to Almrskogholt due to hearing of how the Germanic warriors fought, believing his rebellion could only succeed if they joined him.

The Governor and Chieftain at this time was Volundr Haraldsson, a great grandson of Gunnhilda, who also, as it happened, acted as Governor of Kengir too, his family coming into possession of the title after Jorg's line died out in the 1940s.

Volundr was no friend of the Albines so it took little convincing by Galates to get him to join his rebellion. His main grievance with Memnon was his utter lack of concern for the North American provinces, his focus being on Samothea proper and Kelta, believing they, not the North American lands, were the heart of the Empire and needed more attention.

This had led to lack of funding and left Kengir and Almrskogholt and Gudrun nearly dependent on their own resources. Volundr relied on his friendship and partnerships with many Native Chiefs throughout the provinces for trade goods and other materials. It was also during his tenure as Governor that a large scale migration of Native Canadians to Almrskogholt happened from what is now the Northwest territories, the ancestors of the Inuit among them.

Galates promised Volundr he would give the provinces the funding they needed again if he would join him, and promising to restore the title of Prince which Albina, when she usurped the throne, stripped away from Gunnhilda's son

(and his ancestor) Rorik, believing only the royal family should possess royal titles.

Volundr aligned himself with Galates and together the two men led an army of over three thousand comprised of Germanic warriors, Native Canadians, Akkadians, Sumerians, and Kengir born Egyptians, as well as a small number of native Egyptians who accompanied Galates to North America, to the shores of Samothea in January of 1890 BC.

Memon, not heeding the rumours, was ill unprepared which had parallels with how his great great grandmother took Keltes by surprise, but unlike Keltes he was able to round up a formidable defense and met the invaders in what is now Kent.

At first the battle went in favor of the Albine forces, Memnon riding his horse around his lines giving speeches to his men as they fought, cleaving into rebel soldiers when they got too close.

Then Galates, in desperation, ordered his archers to aim towards the back where the King was. They unleashed a volley down on Memnon and those surrounding him, the King, unable to get his shield up in time, was struck in several places, including his neck and torso. He fell from his horse and in the chaos of battle he was lost in the sea of bodies, bleeding to death while his men fought on.

In the end the Albine forces retreated, but Galates pressed on, killing the Generals and forcing the common soldiers to surrender to him.

Memnon's only child, a daughter, Teranae, was spared by Galates whom he wedded, uniting the Houses of Samoths and Albina in marriage, solidifying his rule and restoring his family to power.

As promised Galates gave Volundr much needed funds and the Germanic Governor remained a faithful friend to the King for the rest of his life, Volundr's son and successor Detric would go on to marry the youngest daughter of Galates and Teranae, Apollina.

Galates ruled the Empire until 1850 BC when his son Harbon took the throne, who ruled well until 1830 and was succeeded by his son Lugdus.

Lugdus reigned from 1830 BC to 1800 BC and was succeeded by his eldest son Beligius, and it is here with Beligius civil wars became a common occurrence so that for much of the last centuries of the Samothean Empire's existence were times of near constant warfare and bloodshed.

The descendants of Volundr fought in these wars, sometimes as rebels and sometimes as royalists, but always as Governors of Almrskogholt, Gudrun, and Kengir. The only true respite came during the reigns of the last two Kings of Samothea, Francus and Pictus, the sons of King Remis who ruled from 1570 BC to 1520 BC.

Francus took the throne in 1520 and ruled ten years before dying of illness. Having no children he was succeeded by his younger brother Pictus who reigned for another ten years

before dying of natural causes. He too died without issue and fearing civil war, the various noblemen of the Empire decided to desolve it, none wanting the destruction that the previous centuries wrought.

During the final stages of the Samothean Empire the Governor of Almrskogholt, Gudrun, and Kengir was Thorri Fornjotsson, a descendant of Detric and Apollina, who had three children, two sons, Norr and Germundur, and a daughter, Helga.

Chapter 3: The Dynasty of Norr

Norr the Founder

In the winding days of the Samothean Empire the Kingdom came into contact with tribes in Northern Europe more and more, including people from what is today Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland.

Almrskogholt welcomed several envoys from Scandinavia, Thorri, a priest of Odin like several of his ancestors before him, always honoured them with a blot (ritual) in the Allfather's name.

One Scandinavian who visited the North American provinces was Villweyln Karsni, an Elf who came from present day Norway on behalf of his King who ruled the area of modern

day Trondheim. This Kingdom was, like several parts of Norway, made up mostly by Elves who had lived there for centuries.

Wood Elves by ancestry who migrated from the German Black forest around 2000 BC, these Elves lived alongside the indigenous human population in relative peace, only occasionally did violence break out between them. The Kingdom Villweyln represented, called Walona in the Elven language, was the dominate Kingdom of the country, being overlord of other States.

In the winter of 1503 BC Karsni was in Almrskogholt visiting the Governor and his family, sharing drinks and swapping stories of their respective homelands. Norr, the eldest, sat on his father's right hand side in their Great Hall, his dark red hair long, cascading down his back, his thick beard neatly groomed. A handsome young man in his mid twenties. His brother Germundur, equally red haired but clean shaven, sat beside him, his green eyes, inherited from their mother, were sharp and contrasted with Norr's blue ones.

Helga, the baby of the family, sat beside their mother and her namesake on her father's left. The Elven envoy eyed her often, finding her beauty too alluring to help himself. They all noticed but for the sake of civility did not say anything.

Villweyln, however, wasn't content to just look. For the past few days he had conspired with his fellow envoys to kidnap the girl believing, for whatever reason, there could be no

repercussions given the Samothean Kingdom's weakened state.

So he stared not simply out of lust but from excitement, imagining having Helga as his wife within the day.

The Governor's family retired early that night, Villweyln wishing them all a good sleep, drinking his mead watching them slip off to bed.

He expected to see none of them save Helga again.

At midnight Villweyln's bodyguard, acting with the stealth of Assassins, killed the Governor's guard, entering he and his wife's room, butchering them in their sleep. After they were dead the Elven guard split up, two going after Helga, two going after Norr and Germundur.

Helga was easily subdued but Norr, having drank little, was still sober and heard the footsteps, waking up to see the Elves barging in.

He grabbed his dagger under his pillow and lunged at them, his big frame making him an easy target for their blades but Norr, trained in combat by his father, a veteran of the last civil war in the armies of King Remis, was fast on his feet. He went around their swords, stabbing each in the neck before rushing out into the hallway.

Hearing fighting coming from Germundur's room he went in, helping his younger brother finish off the last Elven attacker. The brothers then went into their parents' bedroom where they found the horrid scene, but Norr didn't stop and stare as

Germundur did (understandably so, it must have been unbelievable shock). He busted down Helga's door, only to find her gone.

Villweyln's ship was sailing out of the harbour by the time the brothers ran out of the Great Hall, and by the time it would take to gather warriors to chase it down an hour would have went by. It was also night, everyone was sleeping and many were drunk after the ritual to the Allfather.

There was little they could do but watch their sister sister be taken from them from under their noses.

In the following days the brothers assembled several ships to head to Scandinavia, intent on taking Helga back by force.

Norr, now Governor and Prince, selected his maternal cousins Sigmund and Ordenwulf to act as interim Governors in his place, sending Sigmund to Gudrun and placing Ordenwulf in charge of Almrskogholt, giving his cousins the title of Jarl, the first two Germanic people to be bestowed the title, meaning Chieftain and used in honour of Ask and Embla's eldest son.

Norr brought along two important items in his expedition, a Wolf and Raven Banner to be flown by a warrior as they marched on Walona. The two animals had been symbols of the Germanic people since Ask and Embla's day, but Norr's father Thorri was the first to use them emblazoned on banners.

Setting sail the two brothers swore to bring Helga back home, and conquer Walona, wanting to strip Villweyln of his life and Kingdom.

A week later Norr and Germunder landed on the Norwegian coast, almost immediately coming into conflict with people known as 'Lapps', ancestors of the later Sami people, who were the offspring of mixed human and Elven marriages. The Lapps, obviously taken aback by these invaders, wasted little time in attacking them.

A battle was fought and Norr's army won, killing dozens of the half Elves and pushed inland, sending the survivors into terrified flight, having never seen warriors fight with such ferocity and animalistic brutality as the Germanic people before.

Walking through the forests Norr and his men did not come upon people for a few weeks, feeding themselves by killing deer and birds, but when they did finally come upon a settlement they again had a fight on their hands. The people, Lapps, came at them but soon regretted the decision. Norr's rage, close to that of a berserker, saw him tear the half Elves apart with his axe. Nothing would keep him from saving Helga, and anyone who got in his way would be killed, no exceptions.

News of these battles spread across the land quickly, reaching Walona's King, Sokni, who, seeing the threat Villweyln had caused by his abduction, had the envoy clasped in chains and thrown into prison while he marched against the invaders.

The Germanic and Elven forces met outside the capital city of Walona, Sokni offering Norr a chance to save lives on both sides by engaging in single combat.

Norr accepted, calling on Tyr's and Thor's names to protect him so he could save Helga. The two men fought each other for half an hour, neither able to best the other until Norr, giving in to a primal rage, unleashed a flurry of devastating attacks which sent the Elven King falling on his back.

Terrified Sokni called for his men to advance, to which Norr roared an order to charge before burying his axe in Sokni's face and launching himself at the Walonian soldiers.

The day went to the Germanic warriors and Norr, the Prince walking into Walona as a victor. The Elves cowered as his army paraded in the streets. He did not give any orders to stop them from ransacking homes so that, inevitably and unfortunately, is what happened. Hundreds of Elves died in this orgy of blood, plunder, murder and rape.

Norr found Helga being held captive in the female wing of the palace where Sokni's wife and five daughters resided. Norr sent his sister out of the room to Germundur and proceeded to slaughter Sokni's family, not even sparing the youngest who was five years old, his anger and hatred making him become a cruel, monstrous killer.

Once the carnage was over and Villweyln was beaten and strangled to death by his own hands, Norr declared the Kingdom of Walona abolished, replacing it with his own

Kingdom, Trondheim. He expelled the surviving Elves from their homes and brought over Germanic settlers to live in his new Kingdom.

In 1500 BC the Kingdom of Samothea officially desolved, allowing the North American provinces to become independent again. Norr released Kengir from his control, the province breaking apart as small groups of villages across it formed independent States or assimilated into Native society (this would, in time, become the fate of the independent villages too).

As for the Germanic peoples, Norr started the migration to Scandinavia and through years of wars he imposed his Overlordship over the other Kingdoms in the land, calling it Norway after himself, though he was never King of the whole country. Norr conducted invasions into what are now Denmark and Sweden, implanting his people there, allowing them to select their own Jarls free of his Overlordship.

By 1470 BC most people had migrated from Almrskogholt and Gudrun and Kengir colony, settling in Norway's various Kingdoms or Denmark and Sweden. Those who remained in the old homeland eventually died out or married into the North American Native tribes.

Scandinavia became the new homeland of the Germanic people, soon mixing with the indigenous human population (and with the Elven population to a lesser extent) to complete the next stage in their cultural evolution. In the centuries to come they would branch out from Scandinavia

Eric the Traveler

Norr married the sister of a human Chieftain of Bjarg and had one child, a son named Thrand, born in 1497 BC.

Thrand, growing up on the tales of his father's campaign to rescue Helga (who would go on to live a happy life despite her harrowing experience), came to hate Elves like Norr. When Norr died in 1469 BC one of Thrand's first decrees as King was to forbid any Elves from settling in his Kingdom, but unlike his father he did not see it as necessary to wage war against them. He may have hated them, but he did not wish to see them exterminated.

In 1465 BC Thrand married Sansha Ordenwulfsdottir, the daughter of Ordenwulf. Ironically Sansha, while not half Elven, carried an Elven name, her parents liking the sound of it. By 1460 they had three daughters and in that year welcomed their first and only son, whom they named Eric.

From the time he learned to talk and walk Eric was a likable person, earning the love of everyone in his father's Court, nobleman and commoner alike. Eric treated everyone he met with respect whatever their rank or race (as a few Elven envoys from eastern Norway, somehow, managed to get into Thrand's Court in his childhood). He never inherited his father's and grandfather's prejudices which proved to win him

love from Elven parts of the land who hoped that tensions would be reversed upon his accession to the throne.

In the early 1440s BC Eric, desiring to live life as an adventurer, paid for a ship to be outfitted for him, and that summer he set off, going to present day Denmark with twelve men who volunteered.

Here, in a coastal village known as Norrstead, named after Eric's grandfather, he met the Chieftain, Ogmund, who also had a son named Eric.

Ogmund invited Eric Thrandarsson and his crew to stay the winter with him and his son, the Prince agreed and grew close with the other Eric, who decided upon the arrival of spring to join Thrandarsson's adventure. The two Erics set off from Denmark into Asia Minor, landing in present day Turkey and reaching the capital of the Hittite Empire, Sapinuwa.

When it was discovered Eric Thrandarsson was a Prince he was brought before Tudhaliya I, the King of the Empire, who treated them to a fine meal.

During the course of their dinner Thrandarsson and Eric Ogmundsson learned of Tudhaliya I's plight, of his Kingdom being raided by a people known as the Kaska, who twice attacked the old capital of Hattusa and forced him to relocate to Sapinuwa for safety.

He was in the midst of preparing to march against the raiders, freely telling the two young men this, seemingly lost in thought, speaking aloud.

Eric Thrandarsson, hearing this sad story and being moved by the King's emotional distress, pledged his axe to his service. Ogmundsson, following his friend's lead, did the same.

Tudhaliya I, surprised at these pledges, gratefully accepted, needing all the help he could get. In the coming months the sons of Thrand and Ogmund performed many great deeds of arms, winning the respect of the Hittite elite and military, and being given honours and wealth by Tudhaliya I. In the two Erics we can see the ancient predecessor of the medieval Varangian Guard, an elite unit comprised of Germanic warriors who acted as bodyguards to the Byzantine Emperors who ruled Anatolia then.

Sadly this good fortune did not last. Tudhaliya I eventually fell in battle against the Kaska and the two Erics, unable to prevent his death, were blamed, being expelled from the Empire.

Following this the two men ventured throughout what is now Syria, from 1440 to 1435 BC, entering India in 1433. They traveled extensively through the country, the first Germanic people to ever set foot there as far as is known.

Leaving India after a year the friends continued on until finally reaching what is now Yemen, a land they fell in love with, however, upon reaching a certain point unspecified they came upon a bridge crossing over a river, and on the opposite side of the bridge a large Dragon rested. When the Magical creature saw them he opened his mouth, showing his rows of teeth and let out a resounding roar.

Eric Ogmundsson wanted to turn back, wanted to find another way across, but the Prince refused. He wanted to cross this bridge and by Odin he would. Ogmundsson tried to reason with his friend but Eric wouldn't listen. They stood down countless warriors in battle, he stated, they could take on a Dragon.

Whether this was true bravery or simply foolishness may be up to debate but Eric Thrandarsson unsheathed his axe and started across the bridge.

Getting within reach of the creature Thrandarsson charged, leaping at the Dragon and driving his axe down into the beast's head, blade miraculously breaking past scales and biting into flesh.

Eric Thrandarsson continued to hammer his axe down, the Dragon thrashing and roaring, attempting to buck him off, their life's blood running down, dripping onto the stone bridge, until finally Thrandarsson, against all odds, killed the creature.

Once the Dragon was dealt with the two Erics continued on, crossing paths with an Arab merchant who offered them food and they all ate dinner together, the Scandinavians staying with him for six days before they decided they had seen enough of the world, having garnered enough tales to last a lifetime.

Bidding the merchant farewell the two friends returned to their ship and sailed home, which they reached a year later.

Upon returning the two men said their goodbyes, vowing to meet up again soon.

Eric Thrandarsson would stay in Trondheim after his return, becoming King when Thrand died in 1420 BC. In 1419 he married Ragnhild Ogmundsdottir, younger sister to his best friend. With Ragnhild Eric had several children, all sons. Eystein, Bjorn, Thorkell, and Sigurd.

He reigned in Trondheim until 1397 BC, passing away in his sleep of natural causes.

Halfdan Eysteinsson

Grandson of Eric the Traveler, Halfdan was born in 1395 BC during the early years of his father Eystein's reign. His mother, Aud the Black (due to her black hair) was a Lapp woman, giving Halfdan a connection to the Elves, one he acknowledged but never took pride in, perhaps fearing others in Trondheim may harbour doubts of an 'Elf lover' being King.

Eystein Ericsson, like his great grandfather Norr, was a warlord, leading a fleet of Trondheim warriors into the East, invading what is now Staraya Ladoga, Russia, conquering it before moving on to take the fortress of Alaborg, also in present day Russia, along the Syras river.

Halfdan, a young teenager at the time, joined this campaign, seeing his first taste of blood and death here. The Scandinavians, more so than their ancestors in North America, cultivated the warrior cult, and it was paramount Halfdan proved his worth with a sword or axe as it was his duty to lead men into battle one day as their King.

As Halfdan grew up he came into his own as a leader among the Trondheim nobility, becoming a trustworthy friend and ally to many men of similar age to him. He proved his skill with a sword in numerous raids on his father's behalf, taking part in one attack on an Elven settlement in southern Norway, getting revenge for an Elf there shooting a Trondheim trader who stole from him.

They burnt the settlement to the ground, killing all the men and teenage boys, and selling the women and children of both genders into slavery. Halfdan didn't shirk away from these types of raids, though he seems to have disapproved of them, but his duty was first and foremost to his father so whatever his personal feelings he did what he was ordered to do, good or ill as the case may be.

When Halfdan was twenty five his mother took ill, a mysterious sickness that caused her body to swell and grow sore. She wasted away for a year, Eystein and their son watching her slowly die. Then, in May of 1370, she passed away.

The loss broke Eystein. He lost interest in everything, including his Kingdom. To cope (and perhaps seeking death)

he went raiding that summer, and every summer thereafter, Halfdan by his side. The young Prince, angry at the world for taking his mother away from him, threw himself into raiding with abandon, losing himself in the chaos, flames, and blood it created.

In Russia they cleaved a path of carnage along the riverways and coastal regions, killing scores of unfortunate souls, and taking as many captive to be sold at the slave markets.

In his twenty sixth year Halfdan married Ingigerd Hergeirsdottir, the daughter of Hergeir, the man whom Eystein placed in charge of Alaborg after he conquered it.

Ingigerd was a tall woman, larger than some men, but beautiful and well refined, as capable of sewing clothes as she was wielding a sword and shield, and the two got along well together, having two children, a boy named Raum in 1368 BC and a daughter named Isgerd after Ingigerd's mother, Ingerd Hlodvisdottir, who was the daughter of a Swedish Chieftain named Hlodvi in present day Gotland, Sweden, in 1365 BC.

However things did not go well forever. In 1363, for reasons unclear, Ingigerd's parents decided they didn't want to remain vassals of Eystein any longer and rebelled, declaring themselves King and Queen of Alaborg.

Of course such rebellion did not go unpunished. Eystein and Halfdan raised their army and sailed for Russia, landing a few miles down from Alaborg, taking Hergeir and his men by surprise, none expected them to react so fast.

Hergeir put up a valiant defense of his newly proclaimed Kingdom but the battle was over even before it started, the Trondheim forces overwhelming the rebels. But, minutes before the battle was finished, an axe opened Eystein's chest, killing him almost immediately.

Halfdan, fighting alongside his father, held him as he died and then, in a decision unexpected given his previous cruelties on the battlefield in the past, he promised to pardon anyone who surrendered to him and resubmitted themselves to Trondheim rule.

Most accepted, and he kept his word.

Isgerd, fearing for her life, tried to flee, but Halfdan's men caught her and brought her before the new King. Halfdan wasted little time explaining her situation.

She could either marry him and keep her status. Become his concubine and be seen as a whore, or face execution. He didn't care which she chose.

Isgerd chose marriage, seeing in it the only way to see her daughter and grandchildren again, and so Halfdan took his warriors back to Norway in triumph, marrying his mother in law in a ceremony a few days later.

As King Halfdan ruled with an iron fist, allowing little in the way of dissent, and executed any he saw as even possibly connected to rebellion. The happy, good natured young man was gone, shattered by witnessing death of those he loved. His only redeeming qualities was that, despite his harshness,

he cared for his people and made sure all had food and shelter, and as a father he excelled, taking care of Raum and Isgerd, showing them unconditional love.

His cruelty did, in the end, come back to haunt him. In 1344 BC, while at a banquet with his friends and family Halfdan started coughing up blood and soon passed out, falling into unconsciousness from which he never awoke. He had been poisoned by someone within his Court, rumours pointing the finger at Isgerd, the elderly woman still harbouring hatred for her son in law after all those years.

While never confirmed, she died soon after from mysterious causes herself.

Raum the Old

In contrast to his father, grandfather, great grandfather, great great grandfather, and great great great great grandfather, Raum's life and reign were relatively peaceful. He did not seek battle honours like his ancestors nor did he believe he needed to continue the vendatta against Elves like other descendants of Norr.

The most 'interesting' event of his reign was the time he attended a Yule celebration, one of the Germanic Holidays

that inspired Christmas, hosted by Bergfin, a Frost Giant who had crossed over to Midgard.

The human King feasted among Elves, Dwarves, and Giants, enjoying himself on the delicious meats and tasty mead. As he walked among the tables in Bergfin's Great Hall he caught the eye of Bergdis, his host's sister. The Giantess, an attractive woman, used her charms to seduce the already buzzed King and, however they managed it, slept together.

As a result of this sexual union Bergdis fell pregnant with triplets, giving birth to three sons in 1340 BC. Bjorn, Brand, and Alfr.

Bergdis, wanting to keep her sons in the Frost Giant community, so to speak, restricted Raum's access to them and raised them between herself and Bergfin.

Raum accepted this and soon arranged a marriage between himself and the daughter of Gudrod Solvisson, King of the Soleyjar Valley in eastern Norway, named Hild.

This match was unprecedented in Trondheim's history and turned many heads for how scandalous it was to some of the noble families. The reason was that the Soleyjar valley was an Elven enclave and Hild was an Elven Princess with no human ancestry.

The reason Raum wanted this marriage was simple. He wanted to put the old hostilities and racial hatreds in the past, and with Hild he believed he could achieve this goal.

The two married near the end of 1340 and by 1338 BC Hild was pregnant with their first child, who would be born a boy, to be named Olaf, known in later life as Olaf Half Elf.

Other children followed: Gudrod in 1336 BC. Haukr in 1335 BC, a daughter, Bryngerd, in 1332 BC, another son, Haddingr, in 1330, and lastly their final child, a son whom they named Hringr in 1328 BC.

Raum acquired his byname The Old for living to be eighty eight, dying in his sleep in 1280 BC.

Olaf Half Elf

Coming to the throne already in his middle age at fifty eight, Olaf reigned much as his father had. There were no wars during his reign and as Overlord of Norway he kept the other Kingdoms largely at peace too. He married Solveig Halfdansdottir, another Elf from the Soleyjar Valley, and with her had two sons, Halfdan, born in 1290 BC, and Raum in 1288 BC. Years later, in 1271 BC, Solveig gave got pregnant again unexpectedly, Olaf believing he was too old to have children (funnily enough, as men can never really get 'too old') and in 1270 she gave birth to a daughter, whom they named Hecuba.

All three children, on the wishes of Solveig, were sent to the Elves to be raised in the household of their maternal uncle,

Solvi, due to her fears that some elements in Trondheim's Court, already voicing anger over this marriage, would harm her children.

Thankfully no such thing happened and when they reached adulthood the children of Olaf returned home where they stayed with their parents, living in a peaceful age ushered in by their grandfather and father.

In 1249 BC Hecuba was wedded to King Priam of Troy, a city State on the northwest coast of Anatolia. Priam, a descendant of Greek colonists from Arcadia who founded Troy, had been seeking to make alliances with Northern European powers for years, and in Olaf he found a perfect candidate.

The two Kings became fast friends, with Olaf looking upon Priam as another son, while Hecuba grew to love the man. The two returned to Troy where she would rule as Queen for many decades.

Olaf Half Elf died in 1230 BC in his sleep, like his father.

In the years of her marriage to Priam, Hecuba gave birth to many children, the youngest was her daughter Troan, named after the Kingdom she was born into, in 1220 BC.

Hecuba's reign as Queen reached its peak in 1210, the very year the Trojan War began as the Greeks under the brothers Agamemnon and Menelaus invaded, and from there the half Elven woman was forced to watch as thousands of Trojans died in defense of their Kingdom year after year, including her eldest son Hector and several of his siblings.

In 1200 BC Troy fell to the Greeks. The inhabitants of the city were slaughtered, including most of Hecuba's and Priam's children. She watched them die, one by one, and saw her husband get his throat slit as he knelt to pray at Zeus' altar.

She went insane, killed shortly thereafter by an unknown Greek soldier, sword rammed into her stomach and left to bleed out beside Priam.

Not all of Hecuba's and Priam's children and grandchildren died that day, however. Astyanax, the baby son of Hector and his wife Andromache, was spared due to the quick thinking of his mother who hid him in a tomb along with a servant while she threw herself at the Greeks and sacrificed her life for his.

Once the Greeks plundered the city and left, the servant took the baby Prince and fled with other surviving Trojans.

These survivors made their way across Asia Minor and entered present day Germany under Astyanax as their King where they became known as the Sicamberi and later the Franks. Astyanax's descendants would, many centuries later, found the Kingdom of France.

Another survivor of the Trojan royal family was Troan, who was saved from death by Memnon, King of Ethiopia, and nephew of Priam and son of Aurora, Goddess of the Dawn.

Memnon and his band of warriors got the Princess out of the city with an immense effort, carving their way through the Greeks and retreating to safety.

Once the fall of Troy was complete and the Greeks left, Troan and Memnon returned to help bury the dead, but afterwards there was nothing left for them there, so they returned to Africa.

Troan spent the rest of her life in Ethiopia, never seeing Anatolia again. In 1195 BC she gave birth to a son, Tror, her second child after her first born son, named Memnon after his father, in 1198 BC.

As the second son and not heir to the throne, it was decided that Tror should become a warrior and Memnon thought of no place better than Norway where he could be fostered by Halfdan the Mild, a descendant of Olaf Half Elf.

Troan agreed and in 1190 BC little Tror was sent on a ship to Norway where he would remain the rest of his life, never seeing his parents again.

Chapter 4: The House of Odin

Odin, First Emperor of the Northern Empire

The son of Vingnar, grandson of Tror, and great grandson of Troan and Memnon, Odin, named after the Allfather, was born in the Kingdom of Vestfold in 1120 BC. Vingnar Trorsson

had become King of Vestfold by conquest, usurping the previous King and establishing the Dynasty of Norr there.

Odin's mother was Asta Risnelis, an Elven woman from the south of Norway where her people kept the Elven culture alive in a time of increasing assimilation between Elf and human.

Vingnar had been born and raised in the Kingdom of Agder, the Kingdom his father, much like himself years later, took by force of arms in the early 1150s.

By eighteen Vingnar was King of Adger and already waging successful wars of conquest against Vestfold. He went to war against the Kingdom of Vingulmark and forced its King, Gandalf, to give ip half his Kingdom or face total conquest.

By the time of Odin's birth Vingnar was Overlord of most of Norway, respected and feared, but also hated. When Odin was a small boy he was sent by his parents to his maternal grandfather in the South where they hoped he'd be taught Magic and Shamanic rituals by the Elven elders, a hope which was accomplished when the boy was taken under the wing of Urlendr, an Elven Mage and Shaman distantly related to Asta and her family.

For his entire childhood and early teenage years Odin was trained in the ways of Shamanic Magic by Urlendr, growing to become a competent user himself, but it was who he met during this time that would aid him in his future life.

All Shamans and Magic workers had Familiars, spirit animals who watched over them and guarded them. Urlendr's was a spirit cat named Niski, a Black male common house cat.

Odin acquired his Familiar at thirteen while meditating with his cousin. A hulking White Wolf appeared to him in his vision, their blue eyes magnificent. As it was customary for Elven Mages to name their Familiars in order to claim their service, the boy, thinking on impulse, named the Wolf Great Fang referring to his massive size.

The wolf accepted the name and agreed to serve him as his Familiar.

It was two years later, shortly after his fifteenth birthday, that Odin learned his father had died in a sliding accident, falling through frozen ice, and now he was King of Vestfold. Leaving his mother's people he returned to his Kingdom, untested and still uneasy around humans.

Both would soon change.

Before proceeding further, it is important to note that much of Odin's early years as King have become confused with that of his later descendant Harald Fairhair.

Both men were given the credit of founding Norway, but it was Odin who was the true founder, whereas Harald was rather the reunifier, bringing the Kingdom back together after the fall of the Arthurian Empire, which Norway was apart, in 683 AD. Through oral transmission their stories intermingled and mixed, Odin's melding into Harald so that some of

Harald's early battles were not his at all, but his ancestors, which can be read about in The Saga of Harald Fairhair by Snorri Sturlesson. Further, legends surrounding Charlemagne, another descendant of Odin Vingnarsson, were taken from his life, stripped of their Paganism, and given to the first Holy Roman Emperor to enhance his prestige.

Vingnar's death brought joy to many in Norway, especially the Kings he displaced or forced to share power with him. In Vingulmark Gandalf and his eldest son Hake threw a grand feast in celebration, calling upon all their warriors and Generals to attend so they could discuss revenge plans.

They made alliances with the brothers Hogni and Frode Eysteinsson, sons of the King of Hedenmark who Vingnar had stripped of land, and with King Hogni Karusson of Ringerike.

These men set out under Hake soon after the celebration, commanding an army of eight hundred warriors to kill the young Odin and conquer Vestfold and gain revenge on the Dynasty of Norr.

They had hoped to take the boy King by surprise but Odin, by the aid of Great Fang, learned of their coming and assembled his army to meet them. Though he was inexperienced, his Familiar's lent him the courage of the Wolf and he led his men into battle with faith he would overcome the odds.

And he did, against it all Odin Vingnarsson defeated Hake Gandalfsson and the alliance of Kings, killing them all in a

single battle along Vestfold's borders, filling the teenager with a sense of wonder at how powerful his Familiar's Magic could be.

He didn't stop here, but gathered more warriors and marched on King Gandalf, intent on killing him for the treachery he committed.

In the battle that followed the elderly King was put to flight, running to Hedenmark for safety as Odin took over Vingulmark and absorbed it entirely into Vestfold.

Filled with anger and a sense of purpose in conquest, Odin continued on, taking Hendenmark, Ringerike, Gudbrandsdal, and Hadaland.

His purpose, as he declared to Great Fang during meditation, was to bring all of Norway under one King so that no more wars would be fought, no more death would befall fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, and while the Wolf believed his sincerity, he also noted a selfishness in this desire.

Odin may have been convinced he was fighting his wars for the good of the Germanic people, but his own lust for power was also a driving force.

In short order the Kingdom of Trondheim fell, and soon, by sixteen, Odin had all of Norway under his rule, his sweeping conquest able to succeed in large part due to the Kings of the different Kingdoms joining forces and fighting in pitched battles

all together, allowing him to defeat them all in only a few key fights.

But he still wasn't done. For the next two years Odin waged wars in Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, conquering each land within months and bringing them into the fold of his growing Empire.

Germany came next, the great host of Scandinavia descending upon the tribes living there at the beginning of 1100 BC. Human and Elven tribes banded together to fight against the invading Northmen, but it made little difference.

Odin, by now a hardened military man, formed his warriors into solid columns of power, making it nearly impossible for the scattered tribes to put up an effective fight. One by one they fell, even those who made alliances together. By summer of 1100 Germany fell, becoming part of the Northern Empire.

Returning to Norway Odin had himself crowned Emperor, becoming known as the Wolf of the North to enemy and friend alike.

In honour of his victories and to glorify the Gods the new Imperial monarch ordered the construction of a grand Temple to the Aesir in the Upplands of Sweden. This Temple, known as the Temple of Uppsala, would become the greatest Germanic religious site in the Empire and for centuries after the Empire fell Germanic Pagans throughout Scandinavia and Germany would continue to make pilgrimages to it, praying and talking with the Gods.

Another joyful event for the Emperor was the birth of a son in 1099 BC, giving him a family and an heir. The boy, named Balder in honour of the Allfather's son and God of the same name (and a hint at what the mortal Odin may have beginning to see himself as), was the product of an affair he had while in Germany.

While many Elven tribes fought against the invading forces, some, like the Wood Elves of Clan Velindi, saw the writing on the wall and made peace and agreed to fight with him. Among this Clan was an Elven woman named Tamerin, an archer of extraordinary ability who came to the attention of the then King by how accurately she killed her targets.

The two began a romance quickly, the passion burning all through the campaign resulting in her pregnancy. Like many military men before and after, once the war was over Odin returned home without Tamerin but not before extracting a promise from her that she would bring him his child when they were born, and she kept her word.

In recognition of this Odin gave Tamerin an estate in Germany and paid her a monthly allowance, which the Elven woman used to stay in the capital of Vestfold so she could be near Balder, something Odin never questioned or resented.

The last great campaign of Odin's life came a year after his son's birth. Egypt, wishing to become a power house State like it once was under Ramesses the Great, made designs to invade Europe, seeing as much of it was made up of tribes and loose city States.

To that end the Pharaoh, Ramesses XI, a descendant of Ramesses the Great, raised an army of thousands strong and marched through North Africa into present day Spain, easily taking over the region with the help of local Chieftains, most important among them an Arab man named Harun ibn Walid who was appointed Governor of the new province as Ramesses continued his progress into Gallia.

Odin, informed of this advancing army while it was still in Spain, saw the threat it posed not only for continental Europe but also for his Empire and hurriedly marshalled his own forces, pulling warriors from every corner of his Empire in an attempt to stop the Egyptians from reaching Scandinavia and save the rest of Europe.

In this army of the North marched Elves, Finns, and Germanic warriors. Some were willing fighters, others less so, all bound under the Wolf and Raven Banners of the Empire, the symbols Odin's ancestors adopted so many centuries ago.

The Egyptian army, as Ramesses XI expected and hoped, ravaged Gallia, the Galatai tribes, as they were then called, putting up valiant resistance but unable to turn the tide, even those who were descendants of the great Heracles failed to do much to push the invaders back as where the tribes were not united, they were easy to pick off.

Once the Northmen arrived, however, things changed. Seeing the Scandinavians as a safer bet than Egyptians many Galatai tribes joined forces with Odin's men and together they managed to defeat Ramesses XI's army along the Seine river,

and this victory pushed the Egyptians back, Odin keeping on the offensive until he drove them out of Gallia altogether and back into Spain.

Harsh and bloody battles took place across the Spanish countryside, Ramesses XI unwilling to surrender the territory he gained. Odin, Great Fang by his side, continued his advance upon the Egyptian lines, eating away at it inch by inch.

Fearing another open battle would destroy his dwindling numbers Ramesses XI made the decision to hold up in a hill fort close to what is now Barcelona, but this proved a fatal mistake.

Odin laid siege to it for a month and finally succeeded in sacking the hill fort. Ramesses XI and Harun ibn Walid both died in the final battle.

This victory over the Egyptians sparked an idea in the Wolf of the North. Taking what remained of the Egyptian army into his own ranks, Odin did not turn back into Gallia once he saved the country from invasion, but turned his attention to North Africa.

He invaded Egypt, taking the body of Ramesses XI as proof he had killed him fairly in battle. There were no battles fought here, the Egyptians losing all will to fight when they saw their Pharaoh dead, in a wagon pulled by oxen.

At the capital of Pi-Ramesses Odin delivered the body of Ramesses XI into the hands of his wife, Tentamun, and proclaimed himself the new Pharaoh, establishing the Twenty

First Dynasty, following in the footsteps of his ancestor Longho.

Taking upon the regnal name of Hedjkheperre Setepenre, Odin stayed a year in his new Kingdom, making connections and friendships with the nobility, including Herihor, a General and High Priest of Amun in Thebes.

The two men would form a good rapport and upon leaving Egypt Odin entrusted the government to Herihor who proved to be a wise choice, serving the Wolf of the North well.

Leaving Egypt the Emperor did not go home as one may expect, but he continued into Asia, not on conquest but on diplomatic relations. In Egypt he had met what one would call ambassadors of the Shang Kingdom of China, representatives of King Di Yi, who wished to create a trading alliance with Egypt.

Odin decided to meet Di Yi in person (because why not?), taking seven months to reach China. Here the Emperor and Pharaoh met the King of Shang in his capital of Yinxu in modern Anyang, Henan county.

Much like his ancestor Bardus I many centuries earlier, Odin took well to the Chinese, he and Di Yi spending hours discussing Norway, their childhoods, and above all, the advantages of an trade alliance between their two realms.

Odin was eager to open up trade relations with the East, looking to enrich the North and bring in exotic trade goods was a great way to begin.

To seal their agreement Di Yi offered his only daughter Zi An on the condition she become Queen of Norway and Empress of the Empire, to which Odin swore, marrying Zi An soon thereafter.

By 1096 BC Odin and his wife, who took on the Germanic name of Astera in the West, were back in Norway, settling down to rule together.

The couple had three children in this order:

Osbjorn, born in 1094 BC, who would become a General in his elder brother's army in adulthood.

Unna, born in 1092 BC. She would go on to marry into the House of Brutus, being married to King Mempricius of Britain and becoming the mother of his heir Ebraucas, and foremother to most of the subsequent Kings of Britain, including Uther, Arthur and Constantine II Pendragon, and of course King Charles III of the United Kingdom today.

Sigrid, born in 1089, became a priestess of Freya and when Unna moved to Britain she went with her elder sister, founding a small Temple to the Germanic Goddess of Love, fertility, sex, and Magic in Wales where she married a local nobleman named Owain ap Peredur. In later years Sigrid later incorporated the Goddess Diana into the Temple, honouring her and Freya side by side.

With a large family now his, and a vast Empire to call his own, Odin was finally content to rule in peace. His lasted reigned until near the end of 1070 BC when he died of natural causes.

Balder I

In Denmark at the time of his father's death handling a dispute between Dark Elves and humans, Balder sailed back home on receiving the news and was Crowned by his stepmother in Vestfold on December 27th, 1070 BC.

He started his reign well, winning the support of the farmers throughout his Empire by cutting taxes and promising to protect their land rights, which he lived up to.

For the nobility he gave additional support in terms of money and supplies to further colonize the North African regions of the Empire, and in Germany Balder established good relations with his mother's people.

In Egypt he ruled under the name Neferkare Amenemnisu. His most notable achievement in his reign as Pharaoh was authorizing Herihor years later in 1057 BC to invade Ethiopia, which the Hight Priest was able to conquer and bring into the Empire after a year long campaign.

For much of his reign Balder was a popular monarch throughout the provinces, his popularity due to his genuine concern for the people whatever their station or rank. He replaced the militancy of his father with compassion and save

for his conquest of Ethiopia, he did not undertake any military affairs, and never took part in any battle personally.

That is until 1040 BC, when a rebel Chieftain in Norway rose up, Guthrom, a grandson of Gandalf who desired his grandfather's lands back and the dissolution of the Kingdom of Norway and the Empire as a whole.

Balder called up his legions of warriors and marched out of Vestfold, sailing to the island of Frei in what is now Kristiansund municipality, where Guthrom was building up his army.

The Imperial army took the rebels by surprise, coming ashore on the northern side of the island and moving south where the rebels were, moving stealthily through the forest, until falling upon them in a great clash of arms.

Guthrom was killed early in the battle. Later tradition says Balder delivered the killing blow but this is not so, the Emperor being too busy directing the attack to personally hunt down and slay the rebel.

But it is true Balder fought bravely, but he was not his father and did not possess the same charisma Odin brought to the battlefield. Even so Balder did secure victory for himself, but it came at great cost.

Hundreds of his own men died in the battle, including his brother Osbjorn who was decapitated by a battle axe.

And the Emperor himself was mortally wounded, receiving two spear wounds in his right thigh and lower stomach. He

survived the battle and was carried back to Vestfold where he died a few days later surrounded by his family.

By his mistress, an Egyptian woman of Israelite descent, he had one child, a daughter he named Thorunn in honour of the God Thor, who succeeded him to the throne.

Thorunn I

Born a few years before her grandfather's death in 1072 BC, Thorunn Baldersdottir was raised to be the heir from an early date when it was clear her father did not intend to have anymore children.

When she came to the throne she was in her early thirties and a mother herself to a toddler son named Ulric. Thorunn's reign was popular with the people of Vestfold and throughout Norway, but some in Denmark and Sweden weren't too pleased to be ruled by someone born out of wedlock.

In Egypt she was known as Mutnedjmet and her husband, the father of Ulric, Torvald, was called Psusennes. In Egyptian records it is Torvald who is stated as being ruler, however this is down to Egyptian bias regarding female rulers as it was Thorunn who made the decisions, Torvald only offered advice as her consort.

Thorunn added to the walls of the Temple in Taris and moving her capital there within two months of her reign.

In the middle years of her reign a conspiracy arose between Lords in Sweden and Denmark, led by Godred Haakonarsson, Jarl of Torborg, a city in Sweden. Thorunn acted decisively, leading a dozen of her elite bodyguards into Sweden herself and challenged Godred to single combat.

The Jarl, never imagining she would have the nerve to do such a thing, couldn't refuse and so in the city center the two held a Holmgang.

Thorunn's speed and quick wit brought the elderly Jarl to his knees in a matter of minutes, bloodied thighs and legs cut open by slash after slash.

She offered him mercy if he would admit his crimes and swear to leave the Empire and never return. He refused and Thorunn drove her sword into his heart, taking his life.

After she killed him the Empress walked out of the Holmgang circle and returned to Norway, her agents rooting out the other noblemen and bringing them before her in the following weeks.

She offered them the same deal she did with Godred, and unlike him they all accepted, stripped of their lands, titles, and most of their wealth, being given just enough to leave the Empire with their families.

The rest of Thorunn's reign went peacefully, unfortunately for the Empress she fell ill in August of 1032 BC after eating a

large helping of venison and drinking too much mead, possibly giving herself alcohol poisoning. She passed away on August 19th.

Ulric I

Ulric came to the throne at the young age of thirteen on the tragic death of his mother. As he was still considered too young to rule, his father became his regnant for two years until he turned fifteen when he was given royal authority.

Known in Egypt as Amenemope, one of his first acts as King was to recognize Granold Ivarrsson as Governor of Denmark. Granold had been a Jarl under his mother and loyal in the face of Godred's rebellion, so Ulric wanted to reward this loyalty with a promotion.

Granold was descended from Dan, a Greek-Israelite of the Tribe of Simeon and veteran of the Trojan War who, after the war ended, decided to continue living the warrior's life, leading his band of soldiers alongside his younger brother Angul. This band of warriors, composed of ethnic Greeks and Greek-Israelites (men born in Greece and like the brothers, descended from Israelites who left Egypt before the Exodus) became part of the Sea Peoples, raiders who attacked Egypt and several Middle Eastern Kingdoms.

Eventually Dan led his men to what is now Denmark and settled there in 1190 BC, becoming a Chieftain and, using his military skills, became Overlord of Denmark, naming it after himself. His brother Angul would become an ancestor to all the English people in later centuries and rule Denmark alongside him.

Granold was proud of this family history and it made him grateful to the young Emperor for being able to hold the same position as his ancestor had, relating the story of his origins to Ulric and stating he was perfect for the job. Which, it turned out, he was, keeping law and order in Denmark for years, earning the byname 'Granold the Wise' for his fairness and care for those in need.

After Herihor's death in 1017 BC Ulric appointed his cousin Thorgest, nephew of Torvald, to become the next High Priest of Amun in Thebes. Thorgest's family moved to Egypt during the reign of Thorunn and Thorgest was a deeply religious and spiritual man who felt more connection to the Egyptian Gods than those of his native religion. He took control of the Egyptian and Ethiopian governments and was known by the Egyptian name Nesbanebdjed.

Like his grandfather and his mother Ulric did not lead his armies into war nor did he fight any rebellions. He was blessed with a peaceful reign with abundant crops and harvests. He went annually to the Temple of Uppsala where he donated large amounts of money for its upkeep and prayed to Odin and Tyr specifically for guidance in rulership.

He married Granold's daughter Alfild and with her had two children, Granold the Younger, born in 1010 BC and Torvald in 1007 BC, but before either of his sons were born he had a daughter at fifteen with a serving girl, named Tyra, and despite arguments from his advisors, especially Granold, he named her his heir, and so it was when Ulric died in 1000 BC Tyra became Empress of the North and Pharaoh of Egypt.

Tyra

Her father's decision to make her his heir was a smart decision as both of his sons were still children at the time of his death and Tyra had just turned thirty, and like her grandmother, was already a mother herself to a son, Dan, in his early teens. Her husband was Granold's much younger half brother Hemmingr.

In Egypt, much like under her grandmother, Hemmingr was said to be the leading partner in the couple under the name Osorkon while Tyra was known as Karimala. She understood Egyptian society as did Thorunn so did not take offense.

Tyra's reign was, much like her father's one of plenty. No conflicts took place across the Empire and she was able to tutor Dan in the ways of Kingship in peace.

Tyra died in 990 BC, after an ten year reign.

Dan

Known in Egypt as Netjerkheperre-Setepenamun Siamun, Dan came to take great interest in the North African province, visiting it several times during his reign. On one such visit in 987 BC he appointed his cousin Idolf, the son of Thorgest, to be High Priest of Amun and Governor of Egypt, Idolf taking on the name Pinedjem.

In 983 BC Dan married a Finnish woman who he met two years previously while visiting the province. Her name was Deena and her father, Sojvn, was Governor, and a descendant of Kalevi, a legendary Finnish King who was known for uniting the Finnish tribes under his rule centuries before the Germanic people even arrived to Scandinavia.

Dan, wishing to travel in North Africa and not wanting Deena to 'hold him down' asked her to remain behind with her father, something she agreed to when he promised to be back in three years.

But, as it turned out, Dan did not return in three years, instead he went back to Norway after that time with a new bride, an Egyptian woman named Isetemkheb, and crowned her Empress.

As one can imagine this infuriated Deena as she had given birth to a son during this time who she named Balder in

honour of her husband's ancestor and this is how he repaid her patience?

Deena contacted a witch named Huld and asked her to cast a spell on Dan to make him come back to Finland or, if he wouldn't, kill him using a Mara, a night Demon.

Huld tried using spells for years to convince Dan to return to Finland, not wishing the blood of a monarch to be on her hands, but finally Deena bribed her with gold, and in 974 BC she gave in.

The Emperor died screaming in his bed that a creature was jumping on his chest, causing him to have a heart attack.

Balder II

Capitalizing on her husband's death and the fact his Egyptian wife was apparently barren, Deena went to Norway shortly after his death to present her son as the rightful Emperor. To this the Norwegian nobility agreed but they did not, as she expected, name her regnant. Instead they killed Deena on the charge of treason, suspecting she had something to do with Dan's death.

Balder II was raised by his elder half brother, Bruenwulf, a son of Dan by a Swedish mistress from his late teenage years. The

two brothers were close and Bruenwulf acted more as a father figure to the young boy than a brother.

In Egypt Balder was named Psusennes II, Idolf ruling in the child's name as he had for his father. Balder II's reign was largely uneventful. He never married and tragically died young at age twenty three in 960 BC from unknown causes.

Bruenwulf

Although never intended to be Emperor by his father, Bruenwulf was the male last direct descendant of Odin left alive in the senior line (Ulric's two sons dying young without issue in the 990s) and had much experience ruling the Empire on Balder II's behalf, so there was little choice in the matter as no noble in Norway, those who had the most say, wanted to abolish the House of Odin since a suitable candidate was in their midst.

Known as Shoshenq in Egypt Bruenwulf visited the province in 954 BC to appoint Idolf's son, who was the first of the line to be of half native Egyptian ancestry, and who bore an Egyptian name, Input, as High Priest of Amun and Governor upon his father's death.

It was while on this visit that Bruenwulf met Tentshepeh, an Egyptian woman of Libyan descent, a member of the Ma tribe,

being descended from Paihuty, Chief of the Ma,, who he took an immediate liking to due to her beauty and grace.

He wooed her and convinced her to become his Empress, giving birth to their only child, Ivarr, in 953. However Tentshepeh had no idea that two decades before Bruenwulf had been married to a Danish woman, Lifa, with whom he had two sons, Eric and Stenwulf.

These sons, in their early twenties now, would cause problems for both soon after Ivarr's birth. They believed, rightly, that they, not their baby half brother, were the true heirs of the Empire and so raised a rebellion in eastern Denmark and succeeded in, temporarily, carving it out of the Empire.

For fifteen years eastern Denmark was ruled as its own Kingdom by Eric and Stenwulf, the rebels succeeding in beating back each incursion by their father to try and reclaim it, but eventually in 938 BC Bruenwulf reconquered it and killed Eric in battle, Stenwulf fleeing before he could be captured.

The Emperor thought his son would never return and thus let his guard down. During that year's Yule celebration Bruenwulf and his family hosted a large gathering at their castle, inviting hundreds of people, noble and commoner alike.

Stenwulf, disguising himself as a simple merchant, attended the feast, making merry and toasting other guests until his father got up to give a speech.

When Bruenwulf stood near his throne, all eyes on him, Stenwulf struck. He launched out of the crowd, dagger in his right hand, driving into the Emperor's neck, stabbing again and again, blood spilling over his hands and clothing. Seconds later guards killed him, running him through with spears.

Father and son lay side by side each other on the stone floor of the Imperial family's home, Bruenwulf the victim of the first assassination in Imperial history. Stenwulf the victim of a father's neglect.

Ivarr was there and saw the murder take place. At fifteen he was Emperor, made so in the worst way possible.

Ivarr

Early in his reign Ivarr decided to leave Europe, not wanting to be near any reminder of his father's murder, and headed to his mother's homeland in Egypt. Here, bizarrely, he took his father's regnal name of Shoshenq and would not allow the scribes to make it clear they were different people.

His father should have reigned longer in his mind therefore he would rule in his place, under his name. His reign in Egypt, the first to see an Emperor actually take up residence in the country, was uneventful until 934 BC when Jeroboam, an

Israelite Governor, fled to Egypt seeking protection as he had been caught in a conspiracy to overthrow King Solomon.

Ivarr offered him protection on the condition that should he ever succeed in overthrowing Solomon, Jeroboam would recognize the Northern Empire as his Overlord and act as his vassal. To which Jeroboam readily agreed.

In 931 BC Solomon passed away and his son Rehoboam became King of Israel. Ivarr used the instability of Solomon's passing to invade, sweeping through Israel with sixty thousand horsemen and one thousand and twenty chariots, causing massive amounts of destruction and death.

What resistance Rehoboam offered was minimal, limited mainly to defending Jerusalem which was easily taken by Ivarr. The Northman burst through the city walls, killing any who opposed him, and sacked the Temple of Solomon, stealing hordes of gold, silver, and other treasures the former King had placed there in the care of the tribe of Levi.

Ivarr gave Rehoboam an ultimatum: Accept a partition of Israel, with the north going to Jeroboam and the south going to him, or die and allow Jeroboam to become King of all Israel.

Rehoboam accepted and so the Kingdom was divided. The northern half would retain the name Israel and be ruled by Jeroboam, and the southern portion, known as Judah after the largest Israelite tribe in the region, would be ruled by Rehoboam.

In order to make sure Jeroboam stayed loyal, Ivarr forced him to marry his first cousin, Ano, who he had made royalty (along with his entire maternal side) when he had settled in Egypt.

With the Northern Kingdom of Israel under his Overlordship Ivarr returned to Egypt where, in 929 BC, he married Karomat, the daughter of Input, and by her had two children, both daughters. The eldest, Thorunn, was born in 928 BC, and the other died in childbirth two years later, unnamed.

Ivarr reigned until 902 BC, never returning to the North, content to stay in his adopted homeland, but Thorunn did, and upon her father's death, she stayed in Norway to govern as Empress.

Thorunn II

Thorunn's first important act as Empress was to conferr the title of High Priest of Amun and Governor of Egypt onto Shoshenq, son of Input, who died a month after her father, and taking upon the name of Maatkare.

She married Steinmund in 900 BC. A son of a Wood Elven woman and her human partner, Steinmund spent his formative years in Germany living among his mother's people, Clan Varindi, only coming to Norway in order to claim his inheritance from his father's estate.

His father was a descendant of Granold and as such, as with any noble inheritance dispute (a cousin wanted the land) Thorunn handled it at Court.

While arguing his case Steinmund impressed the Empress with his intellect, humour, and for being quite handsome, and he more than adequately explained why he should be given the estate and so she granted it to him, marrying him soon after, the Egyptians bestowing him with the name Osorkon.

In 999 BC Thorunn gave birth to a son, Ulric, securing the royal succession. Thorunn II's reign was peaceful throughout, plentiful crops coming in each year in every province.

Sadly she did not reign long, passing away unexpectedly in 887 BC, leaving the throne to her teenaged son.

Ulric II

Being thirteen at the time of his accession Ulric's father acted as his regnant. Shoshenq gave him the name of Heqakheperre Shoshenq in honour of his grandfather Ivarr. In 884 BC at fifteen Ulric took the powers of government.

In his early adult years he went to Egypt to conduct a state visit. While in the Kingdom he was introduced to Candena, a woman from neighbouring Nubia, a country in modern day Sudan. Candena was the daughter of Apate, an Nubian tribal

King who was allied with Egypt, and as her father's only child was sent there to serve as an political hostage.

Beautiful, graceful, and intelligent, Candena caught the young Emperor's eye almost from the outset. There was a brief courtship, and then Ulric proposed. Candena accepted, becoming the first Black Empress to be Crowned in Trondheim, receiving the Egyptian name of Nesitanebetashru.

Together the two had one child, born in 877 BC named Torric. Later in life, in 856, the Imperial couple adopted a distant relative of Candena's, a baby boy named Tawit, and raised him as their son, Ulric bestowing upon him his father's name.

Despite their age difference Tawit/Steinmund and Torric would be close in their adulthood, with the Nubian Prince acting as his closest advisor.

As for Ulric he reigned until 831 BC when, in Germany, a rebellion broke out among the human tribes there. The elderly Emperor marched against them and defeated them, but at the cost of his own life. In the final battle, fought near what is now Cologne, he suffered a severe blow to the back of the head from a war club, shattering his skull, but it did not kill him outright.

Ulric lingered for days before dying from septic shock following his wound becoming infected. Following his death the Emperor's body, as per his wishes, was sent to Egypt where a very elderly Shoshenq conducted his funeral rites,

mummifying his body and sealing it inside a tomb in Tanis in the Nile Delta.

Torric I

Like his grandmother Torric commenced his reign by naming a new High Priest of Amun and Governor of Egypt, but not due to a death of the former Priest, but because Shoshenq was asking to retire. To replace him Torric named Shoshenq's son Iuwelot to the position as the man, now in his middle thirties, had been a priest of Amun for years at Memphis and was experienced and willing to take up the position.

Iuwelot in turn conferred the Egyptian name of Hedjkheperre Setepenre onto Torric as his regnal name in his North African Kingdom. From Egypt Torric went to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, now under the rule of King Jehu. Jehu, a Monotheist who was tolerant of Polytheism within his Kingdom, welcomed his Overlord warmly.

While in Northern Israel Torric visited the holy places of Dan and Bethel, paying his respect to the Israelite Pantheon of Gods, Jehu acting as his guide.

It was during the visit to the holy sites that a raid from Aram-Damascus (a Kingdom in modern Syria) took place, forcing Torric and Jehu to lead the Israelite army against the attackers

under Aram-Damascus' King, Hazael. The combined Germanic and Israelite force was able to beat the Arameans back, but in later years Jehu would suffer more raids.

After leaving Northern Israel Torric visited the Kingdom of Judah in the South. One may think tensions would be rather high between the Northern Emperor and Jehoash, King of Judah and a descendant of Rehoboam, given that it was Torric's great grandfather who led to the united Kingdom of Israel to split in half, but Jehoash's regnant (he was still but a boy) held no such hatred for Torric and allowed him into his Court.

Jehoash was the last surviving son of his father, Ahaziah, all his other family members being killed in a rebellion led by his paternal grandmother Athaliah in attempt to secure power herself, which she achieved for seven years, ruling as Judah's first and only Queen, until Jehoash, saved by his aunt Jehosheba and her husband, the High Priest of Israel, Jehoiada, was Crowned King by them in Solomon's Temple.

When his grandmother heard of this rebellious act she rushed to the Temple with soldiers to kill her daughter, son in law, and grandson, only to find herself at the wrong end of a blade, leaving the way for Jehoash to take the throne properly.

Torric and Jehoash's regnant, the Priest Jehoiada, made an alliance between their realms, becoming friends with each other on a personal level and sealed it with a marriage between the Emperor and Jehoiada and Jehosheba's eldest daughter Tamar.

Tamar was, through her father, a descendant of Aaron, the brother of Moses and the first High Priest of Israel. Through her mother she was descended from King David and Solomon and through her the House of Odin would become members of the House of David. In Egypt she was known as Kapes.

Returning to Norway by 828 BC Torric and Tamar welcomed their first son, Magnus, in 827, and a daughter, Bathsheba, in 825 BC, who unfortunately passed away at three years old.

Torric's reign ended in 793 BC when the Emperor was killed in a Holmgang against his son. Magnus, catching his father cheating on his mother with an Elven mistress, challenged the elderly man to a duel.

Duty bound to accept the Emperor put aside his parental feelings for his boy and met him in the circle, losing his life in the process.

Magnus the Red

Given the byname of The Red due to how his father's blood splashed onto his chest and face as he killed him, Magnus Torricsson started his reign with violence and it continued. Going to Egypt in 791 BC, Magnus, known there under the regnal name of Osorkon III, led the defense of the Kingdom

against raids from Assyria, a growing power in the Middle East.

He fought several battles against them, and forced their forces back each time, coming to blows with Assyrian Prince Ashurnirari, son of Assyrian King Adad-nirari, nearly killing the Prince before he fled the field.

The Assyrian invasions continued into early 788 BC when Adad-nirari, realizing Magnus was an excellent General and there was little chance he would catch him 'napping' as it were, decided to come to terms with him. In exchange for peace and a friendship treaty between them with a renewal of trade, Adad-nirari gave his daughter Semiramis in marriage to the Emperor, making him a member of the Assyrian royal house.

Semiramis was descended from a long line of Kings, stretching further back than the House of Odin or its predecessor the Dynasty of Norr in Norway, with her earliest known royal ancestor being Adasi, King of Assyria in the 18th century BC, bringing more prestige to Odin's descendants and infusing his family with more royal blood.

In Egypt Magnus' new Queen was given the regnal name of Karomat II, where Magnus stayed for several years after defeating the Assyrians. He made repairs and added to the Temples of the Goddess Bastet in Bubastis, the center of her worship in the Kingdom.

Magnus, while never forgetting Germanic Polytheism, was drawn to the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses more, taking as his patron deity the God Amun, King of the Gods in Upper Egypt and patron to Kings. Magnus loved cats and Bastet, the Goddess who often took the form of a woman with a feline head, became a favorite of his due to her protection of cats.

Magnus added to the cities of Memphis, Tanis, and Thebes, residing in each city for several months at a time, enjoying the company of both native born Egyptians and those of Scandinavian ancestry who had been born in the Kingdom, including a man named Kolgrim, who was a Priest of Amun in Memphis, who became a lover of the Emperor after Semiramis died in childbirth in 784 BC.

The son she gave birth to, however, survived, and Magnus named him Manred and loved him dearly, both as the last gift given by Semiramis who, despite their arranged marriage, came to mean a great deal to him, and because he thought he could never have children due to a bad dream he had as a teenager where he interpreted Frigga cursing his loins for some unknown transgression.

Manred was the apple of his father's eye as the saying goes, and the Prince grew up spoiled, first in Egypt than as the 780s came to a close in Norway where Magnus and Kolgrim decided to resettle.

Homosexuality (or in Magnus' case, bisexuality) as we understand was not deemed a moral crime in ancient Germanic law or society, but neither was it seen as desirable

as it prevented procreation. Those who engaged in it were not shunned or treated differently, so long as they acted discreetly, keeping it to themselves in their homes.

Magnus and Kolgrim did just this, with the Emperor never remarrying and maintaining a loving bond with the Norse-Egyptian for the rest of his life, Kolgrim acting as an uncle to Manred.

Another uncle important to Manred's development was his grandfather's adopted brother Steinmund. His great uncle, though an elderly man, was still as agile and strong as he was during Torric's early reign, playing with Manred, teaching him swordsmanship, reading, and horseback riding.

Two other important people in the young Prince's life (and his father's) was Paanmeny, the Imperial family's doctor who Magnus brought back from Egypt and Ankhkherednefer, the guardian of the Palace, Scribe to Magnus, and a General.

Ankhkherednefer would, during the early reign of Manred, begin and complete a history of the House of Odin up to Manred's reign entitled *The Lives of The Emperors of the North* which would one day, centuries later, make its way to the Library of Alexandria in Egypt and copies of it went to Britain where Arthur Pendragon and his successors, descendants of the House of Odin and Magnus and Manred, read it with relish.

Magnus the Red enjoyed a happy reign with his son and partner by his side. Despite acquiring his byname in an act of

violence he was far from a brutal man, having a heart of kindness and understanding to both the high and low born in his Empire. When he fell ill in the fall of 755 BC Kolgrim nursed him night and day for two months, never leaving his bedside unless matters were urgent.

During this time Manred took his first steps in terms of rulership, governing the Empire in his father's name. Then, in late November, Magnus died, his son and partner beside him when he passed.

Manred

One of the last acts of Magnus' reign before he slipped into sickness was to appoint Nesibanebdjedet, the son of Iuwelot, as High Priest of Amun and Governor of Egypt, who in turn named Manred Usermaatse Setepenre Shoshenq.

Kolgrim, on the young Emperor's request, stayed on as an advisor in the Imperial Court, as did Ankhkherednefer, and he kept Paanmeny in his employ, valuing the man's medical skills.

His great uncle Steinmund, white bearded and bald, was a constant figure at Court, never missing a day despite his nephew's requests he take it easy. Steinmund's energy continued for several more years, advising his nephew and

even arranging his marriage to his cousin, Princess Naomi of Judah, daughter of King Uzziah and great granddaughter to King Jehoash.

In 750 BC Steinmund passed away from natural causes, Manred having his body cremated per his wishes and sent the ashes to Nubia where the elderly man wanted them buried with his ancestors.

Shortly after Steinmund's death Naomi gave birth to a son whom Manred named David in honour of the great King of Israel both he and his wife shared as an ancestor.

In 748 BC a rebellion began in Egypt under a man named Pedubast, a General of Libyan descent who attacked and took Thebes with the aid of the Ma tribe, killing Nesibanebdjedet and establishing his base there and for the next several years Manred led armies against him, none able to oust the usurper, forcing the Emperor to divide Egypt in half between them, with Upper Egypt going to Pedubast and Lower Egypt remaining under Imperial rule.

In the aftermath of losing Upper Egypt Manred selected a younger brother of Nesibanebdjedet, Harsiese, to be the new High Priest of Amun and Governor of Lower Egypt.

For the next several years an uneasy tension existed between Upper and Lower Egypt, Manred making it quite clear he intended on restoring control to the entire Kingdom, and was amassing an army of unprecedented size in order to do it.

In 739 BC Manred struck, invading Upper Egypt at the head of an army comprising thousands, mostly Germanic warriors pulled from Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, chosen for their brutality and strength. Manred was not taking any chances and wanted only the best in his attempts at reconquest.

Pedubast was dead by then, having passed away in 742 BC, leaving his son Rudamun as Pharaoh of Upper Egypt.

Redamun, untried in war, was utterly overwhelmed by this giant assault and retreated inside Thebes. A horrible mistake.

In a month long siege Manred took the city, destroying Pedubast's Dynasty, but he did not kill Rudamun as one may expect. He understood the boy (still only nineteen) was out of his depth. In exchange for an oath of loyalty Manred promised to train him in the ways of war and make him a General in his armies, a offer Rudamun gratefully accepted.

Rudamun would become a valued General of Manred's and serve well into David's reign. His daughter, Irbastudjanefu, would marry Harsiese's son and successor Nimlot.

After the reconquest of Upper Egypt Manred returned to Norway where he was able to see out the rest of his reign in peace.

Prior to his death he managed to arrange the marriage of David to Livia, the adopted daughter of Numa Pomilius, the second King of Rome, and the biological daughter of Rome's first King, Romulus, securing an ally in the Kingdom of Rome.

Manred died in 730 BC, his death was followed by Kolgrim's soon after, the elderly man committing suicide over the loss of the Emperor who he considered a son, casting a dark cloud over David's accession to power.

David

David, unlike all his ancestors, never stepped foot outside Norway during his reign. Named as Hedjkheperre Setepenre Shoshenq in Egypt the Emperor gave little care for that particular province, entirely disrespecting the effort his father put in to recover it. Luckily for David, Harsiese and then Nimlot were able Governors who, by his neglect of Egypt, became the virtual Pharaohs themselves though of course they never took the title.

A man of lust and pleasure, David threw himself into drinking binges and sleeping with the daughters of his nobility (with or without their consent). His father's spoiling gave him a classic case of 'spoiled brat' syndrome but unlike many he never grew out of it.

As he was utterly incapable (and unwilling) to rule, David handed the reins of government over to Hjalti, the son of Steinmund and his wife Alva, an Norse-Egyptian woman who came to Norway when Magnus returned.

To his great credit Hjalti Steinmundsson did a wonderful job keeping the Empire together during David's 'rule' as his sovereign ran around drinking, fucking, and wasting his days away on the finest meats, sweets, and clothing he could buy.

While the Emperor was drinking and partying in Norway, in other parts of his Empire things were turning south. In the Kingdom of Northern Israel Hoshea, a military man selected to be King by David after the former monarch, Pekah, had been assassinated (by Hoshea no less. David didn't care) was facing increasing threats by the Assyrians.

Things became so bad that Hoshea was contemplating switching loyalties to the Assyrians, but Hjalti managed to keep Northern Israel within the Empire for awhile, despite the hostilities the Assyrians were showing.

In 727 BC, amid his almost nightly sexual affairs, David managed to get Livia pregnant before promptly telling her he wasn't interested in her anymore and shacking up with a Dark Elven mistress.

Livia, raised by the pious Numa, took strength from her faith in the Roman Gods, especially the Goddesses Diana and Minerva, and continued to reside in Trondheim as Empress, helping Hjalti govern the Empire, the two forming a close (platonic) friendship.

In 726 BC Livia gave birth to a daughter whom she named Thorunn, both in honour of the great women of David's family and for Hjalti's maternal grandmother who helped as a

midwife during her labour. David, drunk on the day his daughter was born (June 15th), never even learned about it until a day later, upon which he celebrated by getting hammered some more.

In 722 BC Northern Israel was invaded by Assyria and Hoshea, unable to defend his realm with his army and the small Imperial garrison, had no choice but to flee by ship, getting blown off course by a storm heading for Norway, and ending up in Japan of all places, at this time still a patchwork of different Kingdoms and tribes, where he met Queen Himiko of the Yamato Kingdom in what is now the Nara Prefecture on the island of Honshu, a descendant of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu.

Hoshea went on to marry Himiko and become King of Yamato as King Osee, and their descendants would play a vital role in Japan's unification.

How the Emperor managed to survive until 712 BC is anyone's guess, but his hard living lifestyle eventually caught up with David and one day while attending Court he started suddenly throwing up blood.

Horried he called for the Court physician but it was too late. He past out on the floor and died minutes later. Thorunn was proclaimed Empress publicly a day later.

Thorunn III

Like many of her predecessors Thorunn III came to the throne as a young child, being twelve when she took the Crown from her father. Livia and Hjalti Steinmundsson acted as her regnants, continuing on the same pattern they had prior to David's death.

In Egypt Thorunn III was recognized as Kapes II, Nimlot governing the Kingdom in her name and asserting his influence so much so that some in the North whispered he wished to become Pharaoh, but these were baseless rumours. Nimlot remained loyal to the Crown as his family had since Thorgest had been appointed High Priest all those generations before.

At fifteen Thorunn became Empress, her mother employing a single bodyguard for her instead of the traditional ten man unit the monarchs of the past used.

This bodyguard, known as a Housecarl, was named Ragnar Thorirsson, who hailed from eastern Denmark and had grown up in a semi nomadic family of deer hunters and fishermen.

Not wanting such a life for himself Ragnar joined the military at eighteen and saw service in Northern Israel, being among those few Imperial soldiers who survived the Assyrian invasion and returned to Northern Europe.

Now, as a battle hardened warrior despite his youth, Ragnar was appointed to be Thorunn's near constant companion, an

arrangement the young Empress found annoying at first but, promising her mother she would try it, kept him on.

Ragnar grew on her and over time Thorunn slowly started to develop feelings for the Housecarl. By eighteen she proposed marriage (an unheard of thing) and Ragnar accepted, being crowned Emperor consort and bestowed the name of Pami, meaning the Cat, by Nimlot.

In 700 BC Thorunn gave birth to their only child, a son she named Jeremiah, a nod to her Jewish heritage of which she took pride.

In 695 BC, a revolt started in Egypt, led by a seer known as Seti who claimed to speak with the God Osiris. The God, he said, was unhappy with how the people lived, bowing to foreign powers, forgetting the ways of their ancestors. He, Seti, had been sent to cleanse the two Lands (Upper and Lower Egypt) and bring about the expulsion of all foreigners.

Dozens flocked to the seer, those down on hard times, those who harboured hatred, and those who simply wanted adventure. The rebel army attacked Thebes and Memphis, both times being repulsed by Nimlot who led the Imperial army against them.

Seti fled into the Sinai after the failed assault on Memphis where he began conducting raids into the Kingdom, burning villages and killing their people, proclaiming Anubis was sanctifying their souls by allowing them to escape their mortal slavery.

Thorunn and Ragnar arrived late in April, bringing five hundred men to quash the rebellion. The Empress led the charge into the Sinai, her Housecarl and Governor beside her.

Throughout May, 695 BC the Sinai was filled with bloodshed as the two sides fought a brutal war. Seti's men, using the barren terrain to their advantage, set up ambushes and laid traps, killing a hundred Imperial soldiers in two weeks alone.

Then, on June 3rd, Thorunn herself was killed while leading a scouting party back towards Egypt to see if a rebel raiding party had slipped past them.

Seti, laying in ambush, attacked the Empress and her men near the Reed Sea. Thorunn fought hard to save her men, giving orders for them to save themselves, but they refused to abandon her.

In all thirty died, including Thorunn, who was speared through the stomach.

Ragnar, a professional soldier to the last, kept his composure through his grief and continued on, leading the campaign in his wife's memory, until finally bringing Seti to Justice in September, executing him on the spot with an axe.

When the Housecarl returned to Norway he had his son Crowned Emperor and set about securing his throne, knowing there were those who wished a distant cousin to take it instead.

He spent the rest of the year killing would be rebels, protecting Jeremiah's claim. Then Ragnar settled into his role

as regnant, raising his son as a single father and ruling an Empire, a far cry from the humble life of hunter and fisherman he came from.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah took the reins of government from his father in 685 BC, at fifteen, his Egyptian regnal name being Aakheperre Shoshenq.

Jeremiah's early reign was catagorized by his willingness to listen to his nobles when they asked for tax breaks, saying they couldn't afford them. He, naive and trusting, agreed, leading to resentment among the commoners who wondered why they had to continue paying their regular amount when much of the time they could barely afford it.

Ragnar cautioned his son not to favor anyone. He needed to rule fairly, not give in to every sob story he heard, but it took the young Emperor a few years to fully take this lesson to heart as he wanted to make everyone happy and feel safe.

In his twentieth year the Emperor, while on pilgrimage to the Temple of Uppsala, met Freydis Arnsdottir, a priestess of Ostara, a Goddess of fertility and good harvests.

Freydis, a German of Swedish ancestry, was twenty three, and deeply religious, her focus being on the Temple, she barely noticed the Emperor but he certainly took note of her.

He tried convincing her to return to Norway with him but each time the priestess refused, stating her duty to the Gods overrode any earthly mission.

But, when Jeremiah promised to build her a Temple dedicated to Ostara in Trondheim and name her High Priestess, Freydis changed her mind, and agreed to return home with him.

This did not mean she was his. He had to work for that, monarch or not. It took him a good year to win her over (even though she had liked him nearly from the first). The two, however, never married, but lived together in the Imperial Palace as husband and wife nonetheless.

In 679 BC Nimlot passed away and Jeremiah appointed his son Takelot to be the next High Priest of Amun and Governor of Egypt. In the same year Freydis gave birth to their son and the Emperor's heir, Levi, named in honour of Jeremiah's distant ancestor Levi.

In 677 BC they had another son, Thorrin, who would become a close companion to his older brother. In 675 BC the family was completed with the birth of a daughter, Ragnhilda, who would become wife of Takelot's son and successor Osorkon.

Jeremiah enjoyed a stable reign, seeing no wars or strife among the people. In Egypt he appointed a family of Nubian military officers who would become administrators in Lower

Egypt and later become known as the Nubian Dynasty even though, technically, they never ruled with a royal title.

Their leader, Piye, was from the city of Napata in modern Sudan. A devout man who regarded the Great God Amun as his patron deity, Piye took his office seriously, loyal to the House of Odin and through them the Gods.

Piye's family would continue rise in power until the days of his great grandson Tantamani in 568 BC when his descendants decided to return to Nubia.

Jeremiah reigned until 663 BC, dying of sickness.

Levi, Lord of Nara

Levi came to the throne at seventeen but had been prepared for it since he was old enough to speak by his father, Jeremiah not wanting his son to go through what he experienced.

The greatest test of his reign came only three years in when invaders arrived from the east, hundreds strong and battle hardened, under the command of a man named Jimmu.

Jimmu had spent the last several years in his own land uniting the various Kingdoms and tribes into a single nation, starting from his own Kingdom of Yamato, creating the Empire of Japan.

Jimmu was a distant cousin to Levi, though there's little possibility he knew this. He was the grandson of Hoshea/Osee through his father, Hoori. His mother, Lan, was a Princess of the Chinese Zhou Dynasty, a descendant of King Wu of Zhou, who took the name of Tamayori once in Yamato.

Why Jimmu decided to invade the West isn't entirely clear. He wanted to expand his Empire but knew the Kingdoms in present day China and Korea were too strong, so went searching for opportunities, believing he found one in Norway.

The only problem was he hadn't stumbled upon a small Kingdom easy to conquer, but a strong Empire with a young Emperor more than ready to do battle.

Jimmu landed in southern Norway, entering the present day county of Rogaland and beginning his campaign only to be met by stern resistance by Hogni the White, Jarl of the largest village in the region. The Japanese and Nordic armies fought for hours in dense forestland, with dozens falling on each side, before Hogni eventually needed to retreat, Jimmu in hot pursuit.

Hogni died in the next battle but managed to hold the invaders back long enough for Levi to reach Rogaland and smash into the Imperial Japanese lines, cutting down five men with his own sword as he led the charge, no longer a boy, but winning his name as a man and warrior. His brother, though still a young boy, fought alongside him, Thorrin proving he lived up to being named after Thor.

Jimmu kept his men in formation and didn't allow them to retreat, locking them in a stalemate battle in the forest with the Nordic forces. The Japanese Emperor believed he could win if he could just find a loose end in the chain of the massive wall of Germanic warriors, and searched for one for hours, to no avail.

Levi and his men broke through the stalemate within six hours, beating back the Japanese, sending them rushing to their ships in defeat.

Jimmu, his hand cut open by a sword wound, watched from his ship as the Germanic warriors crowded the shore, seeing the Japanese sail away.

Little did he know this wouldn't be the end of it.

Using his resources Levi found out where this invasion force came from and then set out with his own army to Japan, intent on teaching Jimmu a lesson.

In late 660 BC Levi landed on Honshu and quickly took the port city of Nara, surprising the whole Empire as this was the first invasion of its history.

Jimmu met the invaders just as Levi had and the two battled across what used to be the coast of the Yamato Kingdom, with Levi winning three victories in a row, severely damaging the Emperor's reputation as a divine representative of the Gods.

Jimmu, fearing what losing more battles would do, or even worse, if he lost the war, to his newly made Empire, sought peace instead of taking chances.

In exchange for peace he was willing to cede Nara and the lands surrounding it to Levi and his successors, give him deals on trade goods, and offer his eldest child, his daughter Princess Misaki, as wife.

Levi accepted the peace offerings and declared himself Levi of Nara, taking on the noble title of Lord of Nara which would from then on become a title each successive Emperor and Empress used.

Returning to the West in victory the Northern Emperor Crowned Misaki Empress in Trondheim and the two had a happy, if not romantic, marriage.

The conquest of Nara allowed Japanese and Europeans to move freely between Japan and Scandinavia, Egypt, and Germany. Many Europeans settled in Nara city and visa versa, with twelve Japanese families coming back to Trondheim with Levi, settling in and intermarrying with the Germanic population.

In 657 BC Misaki gave birth to a son whom Levi named Balder. In 655 BC the Empress gave birth again, this time to a daughter she was able to name, giving her the name of her grandmother Tamayori.

Princess Tamayori would marry into Italian nobility, marrying Atticus Claudius, a nobleman of the Sabine tribe and with him

she became an ancestor to Appius Claudius Sabinus Regillensis, the first of the Claudi family to migrate to Rome in 500 BC, who in turn would become ancestor to the future Emperors of Rome, including Claudius and Nero, as well as British Kings through Claudius' daughter Julia Venus.

Levi of Nara, as he liked to call himself after his conquest, ruled his Empire well after his peace with Jimmu, but there was still difficulties.

In 655 BC the Assyrians invaded Egypt yet again, this time defeating the Imperial forces before Levi could mobilize any relief efforts, leaving him with no option but to accept the loss of the province and Ethiopia.

Takelot was executed and his son Osorkon put in his place as High Priest of Amun but, unlike his ancestors, he did not receive the Governorship of Egypt. Instead that position went to Piye, who outwardly pretended to swear loyalty to the Assyrian King but in secret conspired with Osorkon and other nobles to restore the House of Odin.

This effort though did not happen overnight, and Assyrian rule in Egypt and Ethiopia went on until 637 BC when Levi, finally amassing enough resources in both Egypt and the North, marched against the Assyrians and defeated them in open battle, winning back the Kingdoms for his House and restoring his regnal name, Menkheperre Necho, to himself.

The reconquest of Egypt was Levi's last great achievement. In honour of Osorkon's sacrifice (he died in the climatic battle)

Levi named his son Harsiese as High Priest of Amun and allowed Piye to continue as Governor of Egypt until his death in 633 BC when he transferred it to Harsiese.

Harsiese would govern Egypt until 610 BC. He had no sons, only daughters, so the High priesthood and Governorship that had been in his family since the time of his ancestor Thorgest was passed on to another clan, that of Piye's, who's grandson, Haremakhet, became High Priest of Amun and Governor, marrying Harsiese's daughter, Tia.

Haremakhet and Tia's daughter, Tesrat, would marry Levi's son Balder, becoming Empress in his reign, her regnal name being Mehytenweskhet.

Levi passed away in 600 BC, after a rule spanning 63 years. Freydis outlived him by two months, soon following her son into the Otherworld.

Balder III

Balder, the third of his name, was, like his ancestor Ivarr, keenly interested in Egyptian affairs from the outset of his reign, wanting to make the Kingdom stronger. His regnal name was Wahibre Psamtik and under this name Balder made contact with Gyges, King of Lydia, a Kingdom in Anatolia, who sent him Greek and Carians, a people of Anatolia,

mercenaries. He used these warriors to put down a rebellion in Memphis and other cities in Upper Egypt, small rebellions which were easy to crush.

He rewarded his mercenaries with great wealth and asked them to stay on with him, which they agreed. Balder sent the Greeks to the fort at Daphnae on Lake Manzala, and sent the Carians to Elephantine island in order to keep possible Nubian raiders away.

As a middle aged man when he came to the throne, Balder did not have much energy for combat, having seen enough during his service with his father in 637 BC to defeat the Assyrians. Instead he devoted himself to scholarly pursuits.

He wrote a history of his family, from Odin to his father, which he left untitled but in it he included every major aspect of each reign of every Emperor and Empress who sat on the throne. He had it copied and sent to his relatives in Egypt and the other Germanic countries. Like other histories mentioned previously, this book would end up in the Library of Alexandria and into the hands of Kings and nobles for many centuries to come.

In his later years, around 583 BC Balder became embroiled in war with the city of Ashdod, which was at that time a Philistine controlled city in present day Israel. He laid siege to it for twenty eight days before taking it and executing the leaders who sponsored raids on Egypt. He allowed the remaining nobility and citizens to live provided they stayed friendly with Egypt from then on out, which they did.

Balder III passed away in 580 BC, being succeeded by his son Sigurd, a product of his affair with a half Norse, half Japanese woman named Astrid.

Sigurd

Sigurd's reign started with chaos, the Egyptian border country becoming overrun by the Cimmerian and Scythian peoples, allying together to harass the Egyptian frontier.

To counter this Sigurd went to Egypt where he was named Necho II by Haremakhet and quickly made an alliance with the Assyrian King Ashur-uballit II, who ruled a remnant of what his ancestors once did, the Assyrian Empire having fallen into ruin.

This alliance did too, within a year of Sigurd's accession Ashur-uballit II was dead, killed by Cimmerians and Scythians who besieged his capital of Harran, leaving Sigurd to stand against them alone.

In 579 BC Sigurd went on the offensive trying to aid the last remnants of the Assyrian Empire, invading the Leventine region and fighting the Scythians.

The Scythians, an Iranian-Israelite people, were expert horse warriors and like the Germanic people had capable female fighters. They clashed several times. In the Battle of Magdolos

he slew the Scythian King and two hundred of his men, driving the rest back out of the Levent.

After the Battle of Magdolos he stripped the King and his soldiers of their clothing, sending them to the city of Miletus in Anatolia where he ordered them to be offered to the God Apollo as tribute, the Emperor a follower of the Olympian Gods who he learned about in his youth from Greek tutors his father employed for him.

He failed to save the Assyrian Empire however and returned to Egypt with the knowledge that the nation his ancestors helped build fell into ruin.

In 575 BC the Emperor, who remained in Egypt, went out again to war, this time against the Babylonians, who took over an Egyptian colony called Kumukh on the Upper Euphrates river.

Sigurd captured the city and slaughtered the Babylonian soldiers stationed within, allowing not one to remain alive. Following this victory the Germanic-Egyptian army marched on, meeting the Babylonian army under their King, Nebuchadnezzar II in the Battle of Carchemish in present day Northern Syria.

Here Sigurd led a charge into the enemy lines, riding a black stallion into the Babylonian infantry, his sword chopping down on those unlucky enough to be close by. He weaved and swerved, killing as he went, his men coming behind him.

It was a brutal task. Sigurd's battle prowess lent much to the Imperial fight but the Babylonians remained resolute, not allowing them to force them back. One soldier, an Assyrian in Babylonian employ, attacked the Emperor and brought him down off his horse, striking his leg with his spear, running through skin and bone.

Howling in pain the Emperor was dragged off the battlefield by aids and this shot down Imperial morale. The Babylonians capitalized on it, forcing a complete reversal and destroying the Germamic-Egyptian army, leaving barely any survivors. A thousand dead.

The Babylonian King pressed his advantage, absorbing Egyptian territory up to the Brook of Egypt, crushing the influence of Egypt in the Middle East, and soon thereafter they invaded the Kingdom, but Haremakhet, leading the Imperial army in the name of Sigurd, repulsed them.

The Emperor would survive his battle wound but lose his leg, needing to use crutches and ride horses for the rest of his life.

Sigurd returned to Norway where he stayed for decades until 518 BC when, at eighty one, he went back to Egypt to wage war one last time.

The Iranian Empire under Camyses, the son of Cyrus the Great, was encroaching on Egypt, and the allies of the Kingdom, the Cypriot Greeks, joined them, leaving the Egyptians and their Scandinavian and German counterparts alone.

Sigurd led his armies into the Battle of Pelusium in May of 518 BC. His daughter and heir Merinelda commanded the right wing and Harkhebi, the son and successor of Haremakhet, the left wing.

It was a short and decisive battle. The Emperor died in the thick of it, on horseback holding his sword high yelling orders, his mane of white hair whipping in the wind, a perfect image of a heroic Germanic warrior, but instead of victory that would accompany this image in our Sacred legends and Myths, it was followed by a horrible defeat.

Fifty thousand Egyptian, Ethiopian, and Germanic warriors died that day, while seven thousand Iranians died. Merinelda and Harkhebi fled the field when it became clear there was no winning, taking refuge in Memphis where Cambyses besieged them.

Harkhebi would die in this siege, leading the archers along the city walls, and Merinelda, forced to accept the loss of provinces her ancestors had held for so long, surrendered to Cambyses.

The Iranian King allowed her to live but expelled her and all Germanic people from Egypt and Ethiopia, whether born in the country or permanently residing there or soldiers, all were exiled.

Merinelda led them back to Scandinavia where she was Crowned as Empress in a somber ceremony.

Merinelda

Born to Sigurd and his German wife Mathhild in 540 BC, late in the Emperor's life, Merinelda was taught, like her father, by Greek tutors, her favorite being Amyntas of Ionia who stayed on when she became Empress to act as her advisor.

The battle of Pelusium and the subsequent siege of Memphis put her off of warfare, and instead Merinelda focused her attention on strengthening what remained of her provinces.

In 510 BC she visited the city of Nara and dined with Emperor Itoku and his wife, Princess Amonotoytotsu. Relations between the Northern Empire and the Empire of Japan had been friendly and peaceful since the days of Jimmu and Levi, with much back and forth between the two States.

There were many Japanese families in Scandinavia who could trace their roots back to the early days of the Lordship of Nara, and some who came in the successive generations, and visa versa, hundreds of Germanic, Egyptian, and Ethiopian families lived in Nara, some for over a hundred years.

Merinelda made it clear she wanted this to continue, for both Empires to benefit from their friendship.

When the Empress left Nara she headed to the State of Qin in China, receiving a letter from the Qin Duke, Ai, while still in Japan, asking to meet.

The meeting went well and opened up new avenues of trade and commerce with China, and forming a lasting friendship between Ai and Merinelda, who would write many letters to the Duke for the remainder of her life.

Back home in Norway Merinelda did not marry but had a relationship with her closest advisor, Ulf Anvaldsson, the son of a soldier and Greco-Egyptian woman who his father brought back during Sigurd's first campaign in Egypt. His mother, Berenice, was descended from Athenians who settled in Egypt in the 640s BC.

In 508 BC Merinelda gave birth to her first child, a son she named Ulf after his father, and in 503 BC she gave birth to twins, Anvald and Berenice.

All three of Merinelda and Ulf's children made it to adulthood, with Ulf and Anvald becoming an Emperor and Jarl respectively, while Berenice was given in marriage to Alexander I of Macedonia, becoming the mother of his children, and thus a direct ancestor of Alexander the Great.

In 484 BC Merinelda began experiencing chest pains that persisted over several months. She ignored them and continued to hold Court until one night in early November when, while preparing for bed with Ulf, another attack happened, taking her life.

Ulf I

Ulf Ulfssons reign was a quiet one. Raised on his mother's tales of Egypt he didn't seek war and instead put a focus on visiting each province and shoring up support for his rule. Like his mother Ulf valued his friendship with the Qin State and in 477 BC he traveled there after visiting Nara and the Japanese capital to see Emperor Itoku.

Qin's new Duke, Ligong, welcomed the son of Merinelda who he remembered seeing as a young boy at his father's Court.

Ulf and his group of Housecarls aided Ligong in repelling raids from the Rong Kingdom during their stay, the Emperor showing that, even if he didn't desire war he could still be a fearsome warrior when he needed to be.

The Rong attacked once more near the close of June, 477 BC, and Ulf and Ligong again led the defense, the Germanic Emperor outshining his Chinese counterpart only in his horseback riding, Ligong and he evenly matched in sword skill.

As a reward for his services, and to show his appreciation for the continuing friendship between their two peoples, Ligong offered the hand of his cousin, Ying Wu, to Ulf.

Ying Wu, a beautiful lady of the Qin Court and, like Ligong, a descendant of the founder of Qin, Ying Feizei, did not like this announcement. She saw the westerner as a barbarian.

To this Ulf laughed and took no offense. He accepted her hand in marriage even as she told him to his face he was beneath

her and with Ligong's blessing he took her away back to Norway.

Ying Wu did not resist or kick and scream. She accepted her fate stoically, but for the next year she never missed an opportunity to mock or ridicule her husband and his culture, using her serving maids (who had been Qin noblewomen educated in the West) to do it.

But Ulf, through his genuine kindness and tenderness, eventually won her over. In 473 BC Ying Wu gave birth to Ulf's son and heir, also named Ulf.

In 470 BC she gave birth to another son, Thorstein, who would become Jarl of Sweden and an ancestor to the House of Munso through Bjorn Ironside's wife.

Ulf I ruled his Empire until 420 BC, dying of old age. Ying Wu, heartbroken, followed soon after.

Ulf II

The most important event in Ulf II's reign was his invasion and reconquest of Egypt, and by extension Ethiopia, from the Iranians. As a small boy at his father's knee he learned of his great grandfather Sigurd's death in the Battle of Pelusium and his grandmother's flight into Memphis and her valiant attempts to hold it.

From then on he dreamt of becoming a warrior and reclaiming his family's lost honour and lands in Northern Africa. To this end he trained daily under his uncle Anvald and his father's soldiers to build up muscle and get stronger.

By the time he became Emperor in 420, he was middle aged and thick with muscle. Almost immediately he invaded Egypt, quickly advancing and taking the Nile Delta, basing himself in Sais.

Ulf II declared himself Pharaoh, taking the regnal name of Amenirdisu. His campaign lasted a decade and more, until finally in 404 BC he claimed the entirety of Egypt as his own, reestablishing the House of Odin as the royal Dynasty after a hundred years stripped of the Egyptian throne, having won it with the aid of Spartan soldiers, having made an alliance with the Greek city State in return for grain.

This deal for grain was the second time Ulf II made a deal with the Spartans, the first was a marriage contract in 434 BC between himself and Princess Helen, named after her legendary relative of Trojan War fame, and daughter of King Pleistoanax.

In 403 BC Ulf named his son, Harald, the product of his marriage with Helen, Governor of Egypt, investing him with the power of his army and near total unlimited power.

Unfortunately for Ulf his son was envious of him and five years later Harald would rise up in rebellion against him, declaring himself Pharaoh under the name Nayfaurud. Ulf

went to Egypt but not for war, he wanted to talk his son out of this madness.

Instead Harald attacked him with his army at Memphis, capturing the ancient city and taking his father's prisoner.

In front of thousands Harald Ulfsson executed his father, beheading him and holding up his head as proof he was now both Pharaoh and Emperor.

Harald the Kinslayer

Given the byname of Kinslayer by those who disapproved of his usurpation of the throne Harald initially stayed in Egypt for several years after becoming Emperor and Pharaoh, but by 393 BC he went to Norway where he established his Court.

Not much can be said of his reign beyond how it started as he was not an especially ambitious man beyond wanting power. He did order building projects in Egypt and Sweden, repairing the Temple of Uppsala, where he went on pilgrimage in 380 BC, praying to Odin for wisdom and help in battle should he need it.

In 360 BC, while on a visit to Egypt Harald was ambushed and assassinated in the Temple of Amun in Thebes just as he knelt down to offer prayers.

His killer, Hakor, claimed to be a son of Harald's born out of wedlock to an Egyptian woman, but no record confirms this and seems to have been a propaganda piece. The assassin took Thebes soon thereafter and the rest of Egypt followed swiftly.

The House of Odin would never again rule it, the Black land and Ethiopia becoming independent Kingdoms once more, only for Egypt to be reconquered by the Iranians again, and then by descendants of the House of Odin, Alexander the Great, and his half brother, Ptolemy.

Kassandra

The daughter of Harald and his Athenian mistress, Kassandra came to the throne following her father's murder at the age of twenty. Many nobles urged her to attack Egypt again, to retake it for her ancestors, but she refused, but in return she promised to conquer a new land for their people.

To this end he contacted Tyre, a Kingdom in modern day Lebanon who had the best sailors in the world. She made an alliance with its King, Eugoras.

In secret the two planned an expedition into the Atlantic ocean to a land Eugoras' ancestors had gone to centuries before and where Kassandra wanted to begin a new colony.

In 358 BC, along with Prince Ishbaal of Tyre, the Empress led a combined Germanic-Tyrian fleet into the Atlantic ocean, sailing for weeks until they came ashore in what is today the modern U.S State of Georgia.

From the shore the combined Germanic-Tyrian expeditionary force pushed inland, coming into hostile contact with Native American tribes who, understandably, found it concerning a large force of obviously foreign people was coming into their land.

Three battles were fought, Kassandra and Ishbaal able to protect their ships and beat back the attackers, killing two hundred of them while losing forty men themselves.

The Empress and Prince succeeded in founding a colony, named Haraldstead in honour of Kassandra's late father, which would grow into a small but successful colony for the remainder of the Empire's history, with several families from Norway, Sweden, and Germany being among the founders along with a dozen Tyrian ones.

Once the settlement was established and peace made between the settlers and the tribes, Kassandra and Ishbaal returned to their respective homes.

In 355 BC Kassandra married Leontius, an Athenian nobleman of the Alcmaenidae clan, an important noble family who traced its ancestry back to King Nestor of Pylos who served in the Trojan War.

Together with Leontius the Empress had one child in 350 BC, a son she named Ulf in memory of her grandfather.

Empress Kassandra died in 320 BC, greatly beloved by the people of Norway for lowering taxes when crop failure happened in 322 BC, and offering them relief food from the royal stores, proving herself to be a compassionate and selfless monarch.

Ulf III

Ulf III's accession to the throne coincided with the Republic of Rome becoming more dominate in Italy and in other parts of Europe and Africa.

He took notice, seeing the potential the Italian city State could have, reaching out to Rome in friendship in the latter half of his reign in 278 BC, brokering a friendship treaty in 275 and marrying Cornelia, the daughter of Consul Lucius Cornelius Lentulus.

This treaty gave Rome the Empire's word that should she need it, the Emperors and his armies would march alongside the Roman legions as equals to face any enemy. The first war that saw this happen was soon after Ulf's marriage to Cornelia when he marched alongside her father into the tribal territory

of the Samnites, an Italian tribe rebelling against Roman authority.

Ulf and his men helped Rome squash the rebellion but the Emperor did not return to the city with his father in law to enjoy his victory celebration, wishing to go home to Trondheim.

Cornelia gave birth to a son in 273 BC who Ulf named Frey after the God Freyr. Unfortunately Ulf did not live to see his son grow up, dying while stopping a raid from Germany on Norwegian soil, led by a rebel, Sibert of the Franks.

Sibert did not rule the Franks proper but acted on his own accord seeking to become Emperor himself and believing he could take the throne if his ragtag band of men invaded Norway. Ulf and his warriors met them and slaughtered every last one, but the Emperor's horse was killed from under him during the last few minutes of the battle and he was thrown, landing on his head and breaking his neck.

Frey

Frey's mother ruled in his name until 258 BC when he took the throne in both name and authority at fifteen. His reign was largely uneventful, he ruled as a conservative monarch in terms of religious practices. He was a staunch Germanic Pagan

while his immediate ancestors had been followers of Greek Gods alongside the Aesir.

Frey went to Uppsala yearly, offering gold, wine, and meat to the Gods and their human servants in exchange for their blessings. The God he felt closest to was not Freyr as one may assume, but Jord, Mother Earth and mother of Thor.

A deeply spiritual man Frey would go on 'retreats' into the forest weekly, seeking the landsvettir, the spirits of the land, and tried communing with the Elves, who had begun to leave Midgard due to how violent and chaotic humans were becoming. He had some success, but none would return in his reign.

In 248 BC, while walking through Trondheim, the Emperor spotted a woman at a meat vendor's stall. With long brownish red hair, flawless white skin, and dark brown eyes, she caught his attention immediately. He approached, asking her name.

She was Thora Domarsdottir, daughter of Domar the Butcher, with no noble or warrior blood to speak of in her immediate family. This, however, did not matter to Frey who was captivated by her beauty.

Everyday after for two months he came by her father's shop, speaking with her and learning more about her, over time becoming as intrigued by her personality as he was with her looks, coming to love her for who she was, not just due to lust.

In 247 BC they were married and by the following year Thora gave birth to their first child, a daughter named Solvi who would go on to marry into the Antonia family of Rome and become an ancestor to Marcus Antonius, lover of Cleopatra.

In 245 BC they had another child, this time a son whom they named Aldric and he would be Frey's heir.

Frey reigned until 210 BC, spending his rule as a loving family man and being remembered as an honest and good Emperor, but also remembered for sending soldiers into the Second Punic War for Rome.

Aldric

The Second Punic war would be where Aldric made his name as Emperor. Upon his father's death in 210 BC he joined his men on the battlefield as their monarch, fighting alongside the Roman soldiers at the battles of Numistro and Canusium against the invading forces of Carthage, both of which Rome and the Empire lost, leaving thousands dead.

Aldric continued serving after these defeats, going to North Africa in 203 BC with the legions and helping them score several victories against the Carthaginians, and being with the Roman army under Gaius Laelius at the Battle of Cirta where they defeated Syphax, King of Numidia in present day Alegria.

The final battle that Aldric and his Germanic warriors took part in was the decisive Battle of Zama in October of 202 BC where Roman General Publius Cornelius Scipio clashed with the Carthagian Master General Hannibal, the man who nearly sacked Rome several years before.

Aldric, the Wolf and Raven Banners of the Empire flying behind him, led the Germanic cavalry alongside Scipio that day and aided in winning the victory. Five hundred of his men died, and he lost his left arm, having it hacked off when he was knocked from his horse and an Carthagian soldier chopped down on it with his blade.

But he survived, returning to Trondheim a hero.

In 196 BC Aldric married the Spartan Princess Gorgo, daughter of King Nabis, the last independent Spartan King to hold the throne.

Nabis, descended from Heracles and a long line of Spartan Kings, being a direct descendant of King Demaratus of Sparta, was an enemy of Rome so for Aldric to marry into his family was an act of betrayal to the Romans, but be that as it may, they did not take action against him. Aldric, for his part, remained out of Spartan affairs and did not offer to fight alongside his father in law, but did send a thousand Germanic troops to him.

It did little good. In 192 BC, a year after Gorgo gave birth to their son Alexander, Nabis was assassinated outside Sparta's

walls by Aetolian soldiers who he thought were there to act as allies.

Aldric did not seek revenge for his father in law's death, but gave him honours in Uppsala.

Aldric would reign until 173 BC when he died of natural causes.

Alexander

Alexander came to the throne as a young man, dreaming of glory like his father won in North Africa and his ancestors had in Egypt and Japan over the centuries. But he did not see an opportunity to win his own until years after coming to power.

In 148 BC, the Macedonian Kingdom was without a King as Rome, in her ruthless efforts to conquer Greece captured Macedonia's last King, Andriscus. Seeing this and believing, for whatever bizarre reason, he had a claim to the throne by being distantly related to the former ruling Argead Dynasty due to his ancestral aunt Berenice, Alexander mobilized his forces and invaded Macedonia from Thrace (present day Bulgaria).

Taking the Romans completely by surprise Alexander was able to conquer Macedonia and establish the House of Odin there. He ruled in northern Greece for a year, in which time he built

up his image of being a new Alexander the Great who would free Greece from Roman rule.

By 147 BC, however, the Romans had mobilized their legions and marched into Macedonia under Quintus Caecilius Metellus, the man who defeated Andriscus. In an open battle outside the Macedonian capital of Pella Alexander lost, losing half of his army and being driven from the country. Metellus pursued him as far as Dardania in the Balkans but gave up the chase soon after.

Returning to Norway humiliated and disgraced Alexander remained in Trondheim the rest of his reign, never even stepping foot outside the capital. The destruction of his army severely crippled the Empire as he took most of his troops with him and many died in Macedonia. It was a blow from which the Empire would never recover.

In the year following his return Alexander married Akio, a Japanese Princess, the daughter of Prince Ohiko and granddaughter of Emperor Kogen and his wife Empress Utsushikome.

Together with Princess Akio Alexander fathered two sons, Torvald in 145 BC and Balder in 142 BC.

His loss of the Macedonian throne and his defeat at the hands of the Romans left him a shadow of his former self and he did not do much during the latter half of his reign, dying in 120 BC.

Torvald

Coming to the throne after his father's death Torvald did not make much impact upon the Empire. He tried, and failed, to rebuild the Imperial army, asking noblemen throughout the Empire to give him money for funding, which they resented.

Many saw it as pointless, seeing the defeat in Macedonia as an omen that they needed to stop being a culture built on war, but Torvald rejected this and insisted they pay.

He reigned ten years, dying by poison in 110 BC. He had married in 123 BC to Selene, a Roman Jewish woman who was the great granddaughter of Jason, the High Priest of Israel in 173 BC who was unpopular due to his pro Hellenization beliefs. In 168 BC he was forced into exile from Judea and headed to Rome with his wife and children.

Torvald had a son with Selene in 122 BC whom he named Balder after his younger brother, but as Balder was still a child, and the Empire was in dire straits, the nobles chose the elder Balder to rule as Emperor upon Torvald's death.

Balder IV

In 110 BC the Empire was in crisis. Noblemen across Norway, Denmark, and Sweden were tired of supporting a Imperial Dynasty that had fallen from grace and, to them, lost favor with the Gods.

In short order rebels arose and civil war engulfed the Northern lands. Balder did the best he could to hold his ancestral realm together, but slowly it broke apart. The first was Germany in 108 BC, the tribes succeeding in killing the Imperial Governor and as Balder was busy dealing with rebels in Norway he could not go and put them down, resulting in the region seceding from the Empire.

Next Sweden fell away, breaking off with the victory of Alf Olafsson against Imperial forces led by Swedish loyalist Ask Bjornsson, establishing a separate Kingdom under his rule.

Denmark and Finland followed by 105 BC, ending the Empire Odin built nearly a thousand years before.

Once the Northern Empire fell the Germanic people began to spread out of Scandinavia and enter continental Europe . Tribes such as the Cimbri and Teutons, Goths, Vandals, Franks, Jutes and Angles all came from this homeland, forging new destinies for themselves and creating new Kingdoms and peoples such as the English and the French.

Balder IV accepted this destruction. He made no attempts to restore his family's rule over his lost domains, letting them become independent. He focused on raising his nephew.

In 103 BC he was killed by an assassin, and Norway fell into chaos, Jarls becoming Chieftains of their own tribes and regions.

Princess Akio, rising through the ashes of this hell, was able to retain control of Trondheim and ruled it in the name of her grandson until 95 BC when Balder Torvaldsson became King.

Balder Torvaldsson would not reunite Norway in his lifetime, but his descendants would continue to rule and would one day succeed. Other descendants of Balder Torvaldsson spread out from Norway, going to Scotland and England in later centuries, becoming ancestors to Scottish Clans such as Clan MacKinnon, Clan Donald, Clan Armstrong, Clan Stewart, Clan MacNeil, and Clan Gordon.

The House of Odin may be gone, but its influence can be felt in the millions of descendants it has left behind in nearly every corner of the world.